WITH VOLLEYING THUNDER BRITAIN'S GUNS SPOKE ON THE SOMME

Blazing away against the enemy on the Western front is this light piece of the Royal Artillery. A shell has just been fired, and one of the men is ready to place another in the breech. Such light guns as this form the outer defence of any position, and their purpose is to check the first enemy advance. When their work is done they can be readily withdrawn and the rubber-tired wheels on which they are mounted make them easy to handle.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Now Was Launched 'The Battle of France'

Whether we have regard to the size of the battlefield or the number of men engaged, the German offensive which was launched against the Allied positions in north-eastern France on June 5 may well claim to be regarded as the greatest battle in history.

At dawn on Wednesday, June 5, an avalanche of fire and steel and battle-drunk humanity descended on the French on a 120-mile front stretching from the sea to the Laon-Soissons road. First the infantry in vast grey-green masses came over, supported by heavy artillery fire and swarms of dive bombers, and later in the day fleets of tanks and armoured vehicles were flung into the fray. The Battle of France, as General Weygand was shortly to call it, had begun.

Little time enough had been given the Generalissimo to reorganize France's fighting front in the north, but in the few days which had elapsed since the break through on the Meuse Weygand had managed to create a defensive zone whose strength lay in its depth rather than in a fortified line of trenches and strong points. Woods and quarries, villages and isolated farmhouses, stretches of water—all such natural obstacles to tanks had been organized as *points d'appui*, so that even though tanks, solitary or in number, should be able to make their way between them, sooner or later they would be halted by the concentrated fire directed from one of these strong points. Even if they careered unhindered for a time behind the front, it was more than likely that they would be trapped as they endeavoured to rejoin their main force.

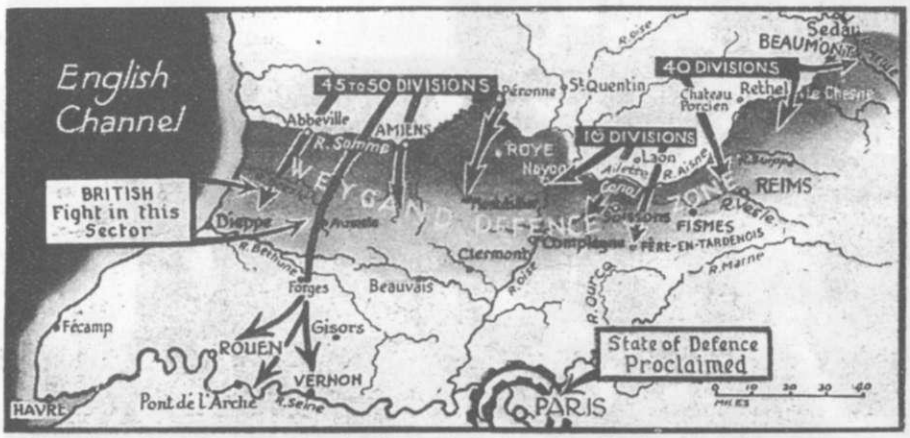
Such was the new technique of the French defence based very largely on the unhappy experience of the last few days and weeks, and in the opening phase of the battle, at least, it more than justified its conception. The French defences were not overrun as they had been at Sedan. There was infiltration by tank columns, but nowhere did these succeed in making a wide breach. With the utmost tenacity and stubborn bravery the French troops resisted the onslaught.

On the next day the battle was renewed, and the enemy threw into the fight masses of tanks in groups of 200 and 300, not at one point, but at many; the total number of enemy tanks engaged was estimated at more than 2,000.

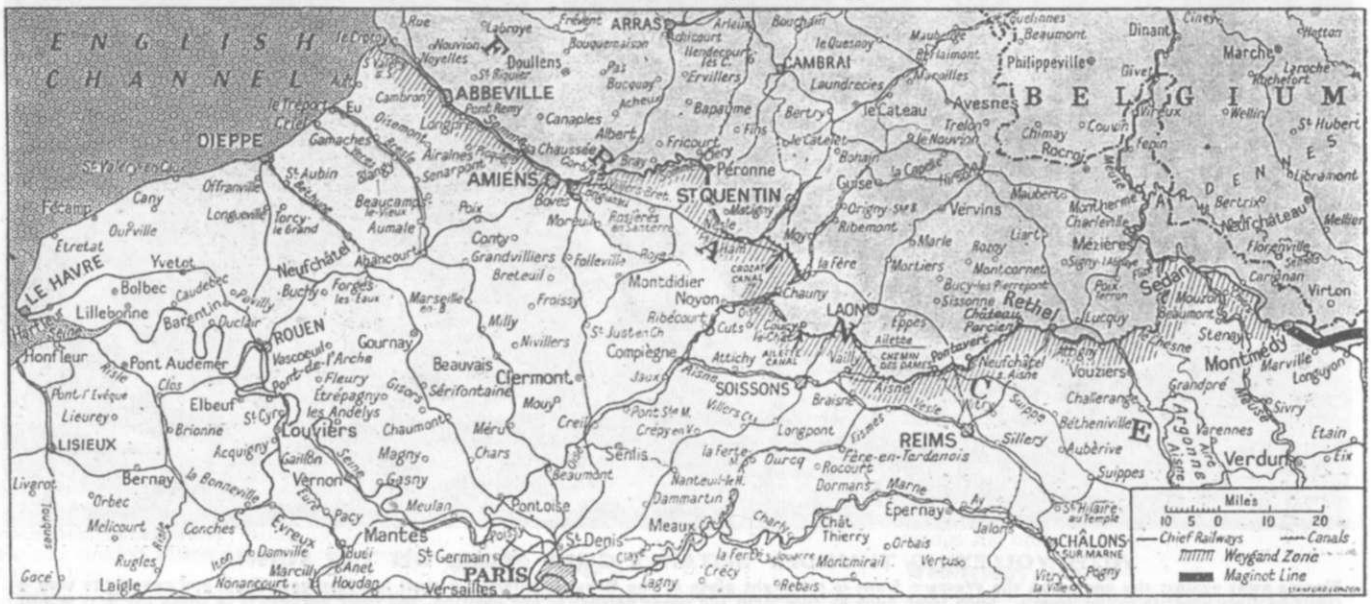
"Our divisions," said that evening's communiqué issued in Paris, "have fought magnificently. Clinging to the strong points, battalions, companies, platoons and batteries faced up to the onslaught of the tanks, smothering them with their fire."

With bombs and guns the Allied aviation harried without respite the infantry and artillery fighting on the ground below in the blazing heat of a really flaming June day. Hundreds of Nazi tanks were destroyed, but, despite terrific slaughter of their infantry, the Germans were able to submerge and outflank certain of the French positions, particularly in the Lower Somme region where some of the German advanced elements crossed the Somme, forcing the evacuation of Abbeville, and penetrated as far as the Bresle, the little river across which lie the lush meadows and teeming orchards of Normandy. Further serious thrusts developed to the east—south of Péronne, on the line of the Ailette Canal, which crosses the gap between the Oise and the Aisne, and north of the Aisne where the Germans secured a foothold on the Chemin des Dames. Here at the close of the day's fighting the Germans were within 70 miles of Paris, but nowhere had the French zone been disrupted, and General Weygand, in describing the situation a few hours later, permitted himself a cautious "*assez bonne*."

Strongly reinforced in the course of the night, the Germans on the next day

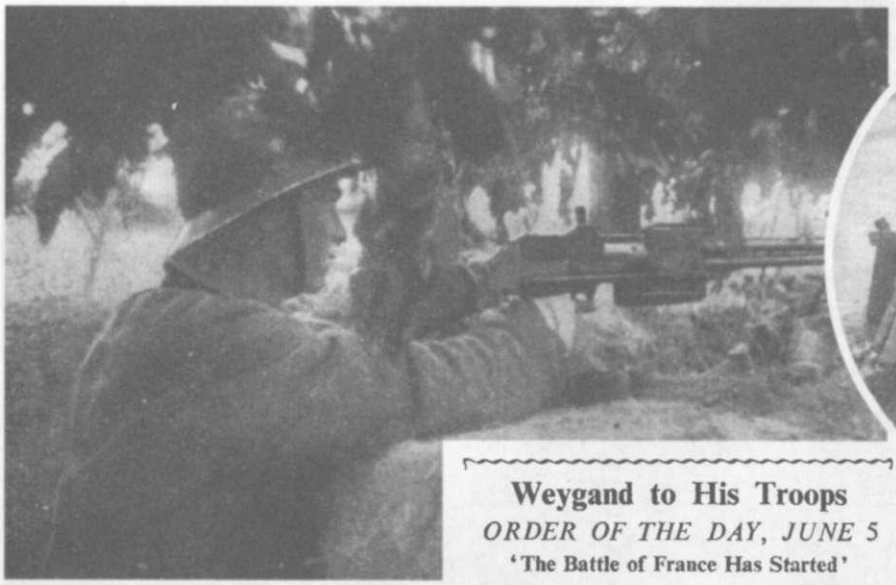


Comparison of the above map showing the battle-front on June 10 with that below, reveals the extent to which the French had been compelled to withdraw in the first five days of the struggle.



On June 5, the vast "Battle of France" was launched along a rapidly moving front. This map shows the Weygand defence zone at the opening of the attack. The tinted portion indicating German-occupied territory had by June 12 been increased by more than 50 miles at the deepest penetration, and the invaders had crossed both Seine and Marne and were only 25 miles from Paris.

'The Order Is Fight Without Thought of Retreat'



This French soldier at an advance post, on the watch for enemy patrols, is armed with a magazine rifle, or fusil mitrailleur.

Here is an example of a Nazi well-armoured car which was captured by the French in the great German advance aimed at Paris.

Weygand to His Troops

ORDER OF THE DAY, JUNE 5

'The Battle of France Has Started'

The battle of France has started. The order is to defend our positions without thought of withdrawal.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the French Army, let the thought of our Fatherland, wounded by the invaders, inspire you with the unshakable resolution to hold on where you are. The examples of our glorious past show that courage and determination always gain the day.

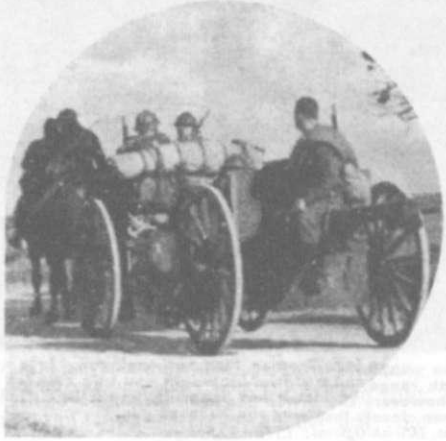
Hang on to the soil of France. Look only forward. The High Command has made its preparations in order to support you from the rear.

The fate of our Fatherland, the maintenance of our liberty, and the future of our sons depend on your steadfastness.

Air artillery is as essential in the fighting of today as the land battery. The French A.A. gun above, like the light gun below, is going into the 'Battle of France.'

Photos, Service Cinéma de l'Armée and Wide World

Above, French infantrymen and cyclists are on the move into the Weygand battle zone. Below, a 25-mm. anti-tank gun is being got into position.



Weygand's Second Order

JUNE 9

'The Enemy Will Reach the End of His Effort'

The German offensive has now been unleashed on the whole front, from the sea to Montmédy. Tomorrow it will stretch as far as Switzerland.

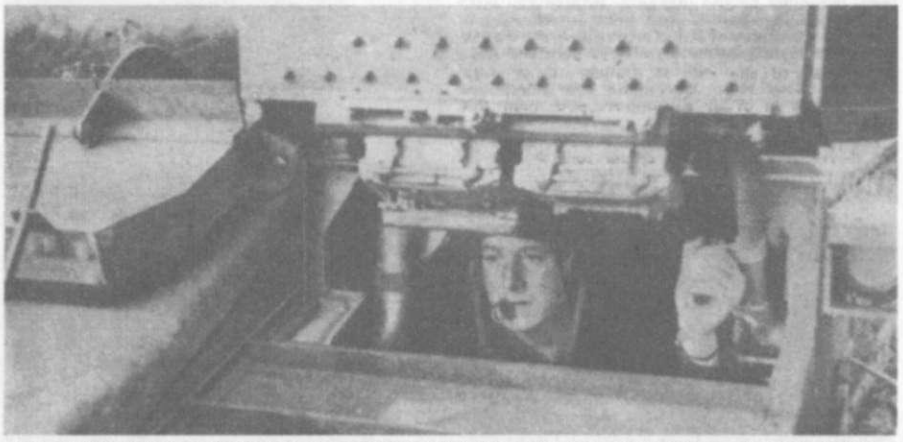
The order still is for each man to fight without thought of retreat, looking straight ahead of him where the command has placed him.

The Commander-in-Chief is not unaware of the valiant efforts of which the armies engaged and the Air Force are giving a magnificent example. He thanks them for their efforts. France demands still more.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, the safety of our country requires of you not only your courage but all the resolution, initiative and fighting spirit of which you are capable. The enemy has suffered considerable losses. He will soon reach the end of his effort.

We have now reached the last quarter of the hour. Hold fast.

'More Fierce the Conflict Grew: the Din of Arms'



The cruiser tank seen in the top photograph is clattering along a road in France. The lower photo shows the driver's outlook; the jolting is so great that the men have rubber pads between their teeth lest they should bite their tongues. A diagram of a British cruiser tank is in page 667.

(Friday, June 7) threw new masses into the attack. At many places the French advanced elements, "having fulfilled their mission against enemy tanks and infantry," fell back, but an enemy attempt to cross the Aisne east of Soissons was repulsed with heavy loss; indeed, it was claimed that all the troops engaged in the venture had been annihilated. Both on the Bresle and on the Ailette Canal the fighting was bitter and bloody in the extreme.

Still the commentators in Paris professed a moderate degree of optimism, but that a situation of the utmost gravity was developing was plain from the news of the following day's fighting. On that day, Saturday, June 8, the Germans developed a new thrust, from which it was obvious that even though the Weygand zone had not been broken, it had yet been forced back for many miles. For the battle now raged between Aumale on the Upper Bresle and Noyon, close to the Oise; Amiens and Péronne which, when the offensive began three days before, were in the front line, were now in a backwater of the conflict. The defenders put up a fierce resistance and mowed down hosts of the attackers with their "75's," firing at point-blank range. Hundreds of tanks, too, were halted or blown to pieces by the Allied aircraft who had now worked out a new technique of diving on the armoured monsters with cannon. Still, however, the German hordes came on, and at many points the French Command gave the order to fall back. It says much that the withdrawal was effected in perfect order and without any diminution of martial spirit.

Now after four days of fighting on an unprecedented scale, it was possible to discern the scope and number of the German attacks in what was recognized as the greatest battle of the war—nay, indeed, the greatest battle of history. On the German side alone it was estimated that their troops numbered nearly two millions, with 4,000 tanks. There had been four main thrusts. The first was on the extreme left flank, where the onrush of men and mechanized armament had

This formidable-looking weapon is a German Flak anti-tank gun. It is set to fire at point-blank range, and a direct hit would end any tank's career. In this case, however, the hitter has been hit, and a British soldier is seen closely inspecting the wrecked gun.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

History's Greatest Battle Neared Its Climax

carried the German line to the Bresle. Here on this "kilometre of marsh between two steep banks" they were held by a combined force of French and British who put up a stern resistance, knowing full well that the price of their retreat would be the fall of Dieppe. That their tenure might be precarious, however, was evidenced by the news that by that Saturday evening enemy armoured units were reported to have reached Forges-les-Eaux, on the main railway line from Dieppe to Paris. The third thrust was directed between Aumale and Noyon, while the fourth was made along the Aisne east of Soissons, where the Chemin des Dames, soaked with the blood of tens of thousands of Frenchmen killed in 1914–1918, was now once again in German hands.

On Sunday, June 9, still another thrust, the fifth, was reported, when to the east of the Aisne in Champagne a new attack was launched at dawn against the French positions in the Argonne, from Château Porcien, past Rethel to Le Chesne; at two points the Germans had crossed the Aisne and established small bridge-heads on the south bank.

The front, or rather zone of active fighting, now extended from the coast of the English Channel north of Dieppe to a few miles to the north of Compiègne, whence it followed the Aisne to Soissons and Rethel, and then cut across country to the Maginot Line at Montmédy. The presence on June 10 of German elements on the Seine at Rouen and at Vernon, only 50 miles from Paris, contained the suggestion, which might soon become a threat, that in 1940 the Schlieffen Plan for the envelopment of Paris was working more successfully than in 1914. On that day the French Government left the capital for Tours. And on that day, too, Italy, taking advantage of what Mussolini regarded as France's hour of intensest difficulty and most desperate danger, declared war.

France bore the brunt of the fighting in the battle for Paris, but part of the line was held by the "little B.E.F."; above, reinforcements on the way from England. The lower photo shows two Highlanders in battle-dress at a well-concealed post.

Now the battle reached "the greatest violence on the whole of the front," as the Germans flung 120 divisions into the fight in order to achieve the speediest and most final decision. In spite of unceasing counter-attacks the enemy threw pontoon bridges across the Lower Seine between Rouen and Vernon and ferried tanks across; Dieppe was surrounded and Le Harve outflanked, and in this little pocket of Normandy an Anglo-French force of some 20,000 men was cut off. To the east of the Oise the French made a strategic withdrawal south of the Marne. Still farther to the east fresh masses of German tank and motorized units, comprising three or four armoured divisions and three or four motorized divisions, were brought into action with a view to outflanking Rheims.

Still fighting hard and taking heavy toll of the German infantry and armoured units, the French armies slowly moved back. Throughout June 12 the battle continued with the same terrific violence; the Germans crossed the Marne near Château Thierry, and there seemed no reason to doubt the claim that their troops had entered Rheims. As for Paris, the Germans were now threatening it on three sides and their advanced troops at Meaux were only some 25 miles away. The trickle of refugees became a stream, and though at first there was talk of defending the city street by street, it was announced on June 13 that Paris had been declared an open town and so spare it the horrors and destruction of bombardment. The French, it was said, on all sides were fighting magnificently, better now than they had ever fought before in all their long history, but despite the reinforcements which were rushed them from Britain, despite the invaluable work of the R.A.F., they were still overborne and forced back. It was a dark, dark hour.

The R.A.F. Strike and Strike Again at Germany

After the withdrawal of the British Expeditionary Force from Flanders it fell mainly to our Air Force to aid the French in slowing down the German advance. One of the chief objectives was the destruction of oil supplies in German territory and in occupied regions. Here an account is given of the daily and nightly raids made by our heroic airmen during the early days of June.

BEFORE the great German offensive of June 5 was launched, our airmen, with magnificent verve and courage, were hindering and hampering the enemy. Our fighters and medium bombers harassed troop concentrations and the enemy's communications by day; at night the R.A.F. heavy bombers took up the task. Day after day the enemy was pounded and hammered; his tanks were bombed, ammunition dumps were blown up, road and rail junctions and bridges at key points were ceaselessly attacked.

There was another aspect of this counter-offensive—the never-ceasing destruction of German oil supplies, at places far inside his frontiers; and along with this the aerial attack on his lines of supply.

On the evening before the new Nazi offensive was begun, R.A.F. machines were raiding oil depots, railway junctions and marshalling yards over a wide area, from Dortmund in the north to Mannheim in the south. Thus for 1½ hours the R.A.F. bombed the oil tanks at Frankfurt. At Mannheim, the first bombs were dropped just before midnight on an extensive oil storage plant and

"flames that broke out several minutes later were seen to spread rapidly. The following aircraft, guided to their objectives by the raging fires, completed the destruction of the plant. An isolated group of tanks was seen to explode after two direct hits by salvoes of heavy bombs. Streaming oil . . . quickly became a mass of flames . . . visible to aircraft flying more than 100 miles away."

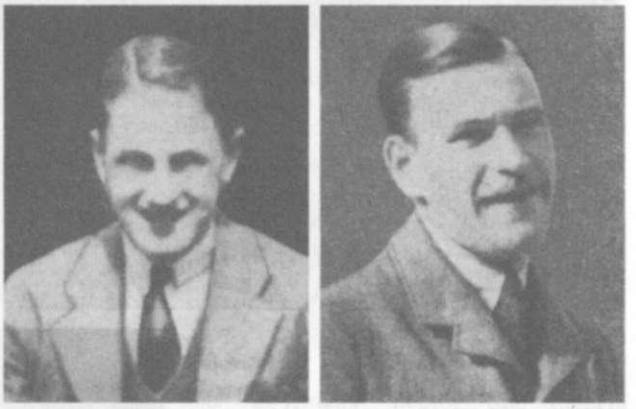
Another big oil store, at Monheim, was located by parachute flare and set on fire, as were oil tanks at Düsseldorf itself. At Dortmund a similar operation was successfully carried out. Cologne and Essen were among the German towns to hear the drone of R.A.F. bombers that same night:

"Important marshalling yards near Essen, Düsseldorf, and Wesel were heavily bombed, and at Cologne, some 70 high explosive and incendiary bombs were seen to burst over the greater part of a railway yard crowded with loaded goods wagons. A direct hit with a heavy calibre bomb on the rail tracks at Homburg, near Frankfurt, caused numerous minor explosions and a vivid display of green flashes, as though an electric power line had been struck."

Though intense opposition was encountered all but one of our machines returned safely to their bases.

On the night of June 5 it was the turn of Hamburg and its neighbourhood. For several hours the oil tanks were bombarded, and adjoining works set on fire. An oil depot near the Kiel Canal was bombed, and the R.A.F. units went on to attack military objectives on Heligoland. Marshalling yards and railway tracks were damaged at Wedau, Eschweiler and Rheydt. South of Geldern "fires were started along the railway line, and it is thought that traffic must have been dislocated as a result."

All the week the R.A.F. continued their attacks, and the French, too, were busy in similar work. Thus, on the night of Tuesday, June 4, oil refineries and marshalling yards were bombed for the fifth night in succession. On Wednesday the French bombers attacked important factories at Munich and Ludwigshafen, as well as the railway station at Mannheim. Next day, said the French communiqué, "our aviation continued the destruction of the Rhineland railway system and factories in the region of the Rhine."



Flying Officer Ronald Edward Garland, the pilot (left), and Sergeant Thomas Gray, the observer of the leading aircraft of the gallant band that destroyed the bridges at Maastricht. Both were reported missing, and were awarded the V.C. See story in page 631 and photograph, page 581. *Photo, G.P.U.*

On Thursday, June 6, M. Reynaud told of the work of French airmen during the night of June 4-5, which was a reply to the German air raid on Paris of June 3.

"French bombers flew over Mannheim, Ulm, Ludwigshafen, and Munich. The colossal Badischanilin factory was set on fire. The fire was visible from the French frontier."

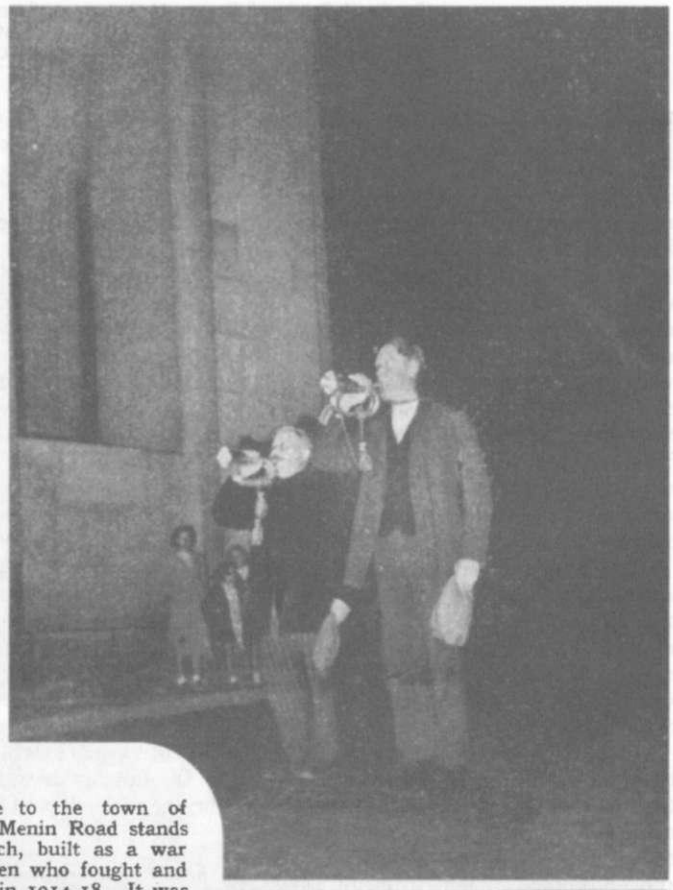
The enemy's fuel supplies and ammunition dumps in occupied territory were methodically attacked. At Valenciennes, on the night of June 8, an oil store was bombed and exploded in a vast sheet of flame visible 50 miles away. Pilots of our Coastal Command bombed oil stores at Ghent, and our heavy bombers attacked the entrances to Amiens and important places near Abbeville.

The examples cited give some idea of the many-sided work of our bomber squadrons. The Advanced Air Striking Force were all this time engaged in bombing enemy aerodromes or attacking railway stations in Belgium or France, so that many such places had to be abandoned by the Germans. Armoured columns and infantry were harassed by our medium bombers; A.A. batteries were silenced.

Enough has been said to show how magnificent is the work which our Royal Air Force is doing. What the reactions of the German people are to these bitter evidences of the enemy striking within their borders for the first time for over a century the Nazi machine has prevented us knowing. But there are indications of widespread concern at the immense damage done to German war industries.

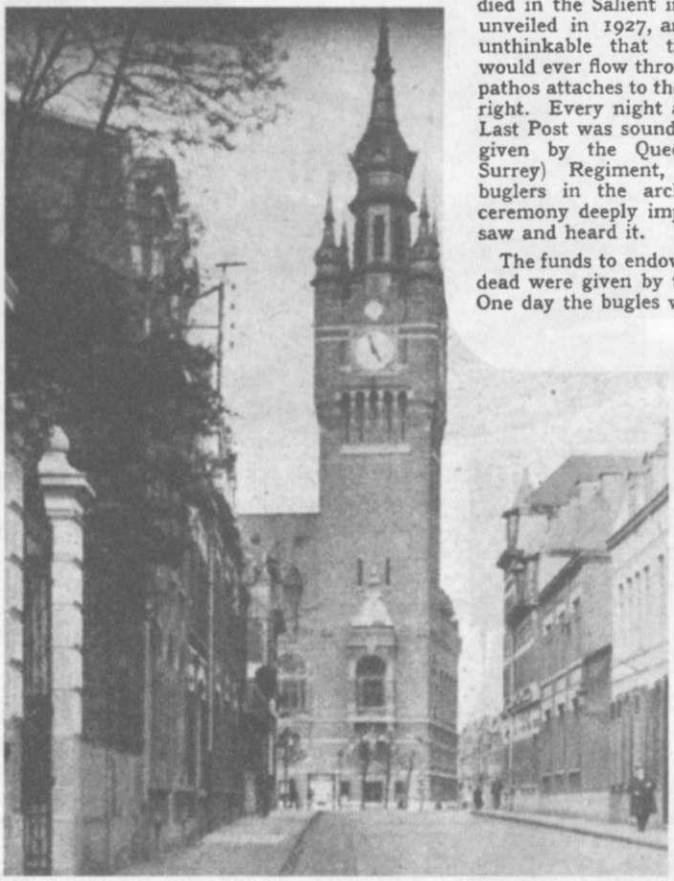
This map shows some of the important German towns where R.A.F. bombers destroyed oil stores or bombed marshalling yards and railway junctions over a wide area of north-western Germany during the early part of June.

No One Sounds 'Last Post' Now at Menin Gate



AT the entrance to the town of Ypres on the Menin Road stands the magnificent arch, built as a war memorial to the men who fought and died in the Salient in 1914-18. It was unveiled in 1927, and it seemed then unthinkable that the tide of battle would ever flow through it. A poignant pathos attaches to the photograph above right. Every night at nine o'clock the Last Post was sounded, on silver bugles given by the Queen's Royal (West Surrey) Regiment, by two Belgian buglers in the arch of the gate—a ceremony deeply impressive to all who saw and heard it.

The funds to endow this tribute to the dead were given by the British Legion. One day the bugles will sound again.



Top left is an anti-tank gun standing at the Menin Gate, which suffered some damage when the Germans took Ypres in May, 1940. Right is the peacetime ceremony of sounding the Last Post, described above. Armentières, seen in the two lower photographs, is one of the towns that have undergone a double martyrdom. It was practically destroyed after the last war, but was rebuilt. Left is the centre of the new town with the Hôtel de Ville, and right is the scene after the second destruction.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright, and A. J. Insall, Copyright A.P.

The 'Little B.E.F.'s' Great Stand on the Somme

In the "Battle of France" that opened on June 5 the left flank of the Allied Line on the Somme was held by the British units which had not been involved in the Flanders operations. Here something of the work of this "Little B.E.F." is told in a dispatch telegraphed from France by "Eye Witness" on June 10.

If any army has ever pulled its weight in a really desperate battle against great odds our men of the "little B.E.F." have done it and deserve the highest tributes. They have fought for days in intense heat against overwhelming forces under a hail of bombs from machines shrieking downwards at over 300 miles an hour. They have been swept again and again and again by a storm of machine-gun bullets from the air. Tanks have harried them from front and rear. Shells from every type of weapon, from heavy artillery to trench mortars, have crashed round them. Machine-gun and rifle fire from the infantry have been only incidentals.

At some places the Germans have launched infantry in such masses that our men have become physically fatigued with the effort of continually firing—their rifles and machine-guns have become almost red-hot. Through all this terrific ordeal they have stuck to it splendidly.

Today, their faces black with a week's beard and dust caked on sweating skin, they are still grinning, still ready to make another stand. From youngest to oldest they have shown supreme courage and endurance. Men from all parts of the country have fought in these fierce battles with dogged pluck. Those who have distinguished themselves include men from every area north of the Tweed, Highlanders and Lowlanders alike. Townsmen from Glasgow and Edinburgh and Aberdeen, Perth fishermen from the North Sea coast, crofters from the Highlands and remote hamlets of the Western Isles—all have fought with characteristic Scots bravery and kept their characteristic Scots philosophy and good humour.

Fierce rearguard actions were fought by British troops on Sunday, June 9, against the steadily advancing German tanks and infantry. Driven back by greatly superior forces, our men held each position tenaciously until the order to withdraw was given. All their courage and stubbornness was not able to stop the tide of the German advance.

Two battalions especially distinguished themselves in this defensive action. One was rushed to a village occupied by German tanks and troops who had crossed a river by a bridge where a mine had failed to explode. The men at once carried out a counter-attack and recaptured the village, which was held for some time. Just outside a city another battalion equipped with anti-tank guns held up the rapid approach of a German force of tanks and infantry. Three of the German tanks were quickly put out of action by the accuracy of the anti-tank guns. The others hurriedly wheeled out of range, unwilling to face the fire.

On Sunday morning at an important bridge French and British officers stood beside a group of engineers with the exploding apparatus. Suddenly there was a shout: "Tanks—German tanks!" At the other end of the bridge appeared several squat grey shapes rumbling forward. The officers gazed at them for a few seconds through field-glasses. They gave an order and huge clouds of yellow brown smoke leapt up from the bridge. Dull roars echoed through the valley and the smoke cleared away, revealing great gaps in the roadway.

Typical of many other magnificent feats was the rearguard action of a small company of the "Amps"—middle-aged pioneer battalions. These men were old soldiers specially picked to drop their spade and shovel and take up a rifle to delay the German advance towards a bridge. They were rushed up to the top of a wooded hill where German tanks, followed by infantry, were advancing. One after another three tanks were hit and put out of action by their fire.

After holding back the German advance the "Amps" withdrew towards the river. When they reached it they found that the bridge which they had been protecting had been blown up. Their retreat was cut off. The middle-aged officer in charge of the party at once decided to swim across the wide, swiftly flowing river to obtain a boat from the other side. He would not allow any of his men to take the risk. "It was a fine action for a man by no means young," a fellow-officer told me. "He stripped off his uniform and plunged into the river." His men, hiding from German tanks in bushes by the bank, watched him grow smaller and smaller as he slowly crossed the river. At last they saw a tiny figure clamber up the other bank. Shortly afterwards the officer came back rowing a large boat, and all the men were then taken safely across.

After twenty-two years of peace war came again to the Somme in June 1940, and here we have two of the first photos received from the new battle front. In one, a group of British officers are tracing the route to be followed by their mechanized unit, and in the other, British troops are erecting an anti-tank barrier in a street of one of the towns afterwards overwhelmed by the Nazi onrush.

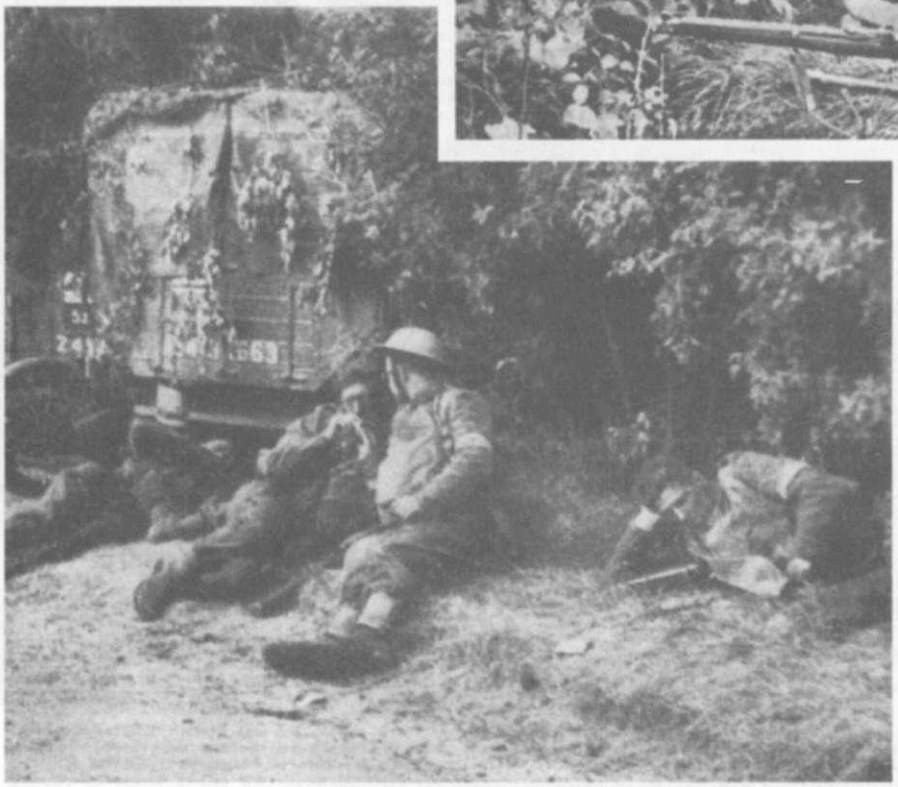
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

They Were a Very Gallant Band of Brothers

Some of the men whose remarkable exploit is described in this page are seen, left, in one of the lorries that they commandeered, looking a very cheery crowd in the circumstances. They knew that at any moment they were liable to attack, and immediately there was such a possibility they clambered out of the lorries and took up defensive positions such as that seen below. In the photograph, bottom left, during a brief period of rest one of the lorries has been run into a wood to conceal it from enemy aircraft.

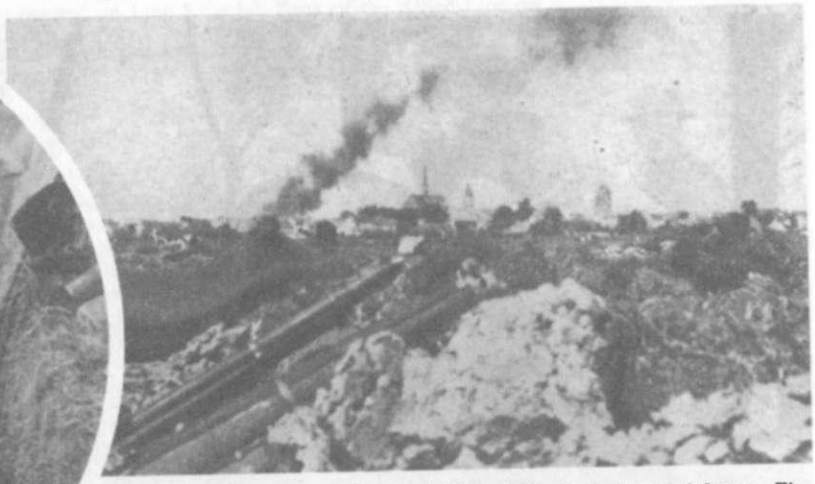
DURING the violent fighting on the Western Front a body of British Infantry holding a sector on the Somme was cut off from the main body of the B.E.F. Commandeering vehicles, they transformed themselves into a motorized unit, and for five days they kept up a continuous offensive against the enemy with remarkable success. Their courageous action held up the German advance at a dangerous stage.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright



Machine-gun fire has been described by airmen as having a most terrifying effect even if the 'plane is not damaged. At an anti-aircraft post on the Somme anti-aircraft machine-gunners are on the alert, awaiting a target.

Hope Cheered the Long, Long Trail to Dunkirk



Left, a footsore man of the Royal Ulster Rifles is taking a brief rest. The photograph was taken by an officer of the regiment. Right, smoke is rising from one of the first bombs to fall on Dunkirk. In the foreground are trenches dug by the rearguard. *Photos exclusive to* THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

As the British troops streamed into Dunkirk during the great retreat they saw in the centre of the town a figure that symbolized defiance of enemies. It was the statue of Jean Bart (above), a French naval hero of the 17th century. The road to Dunkirk was long and hard, and here is a scene on a stretch of it. British infantry are foot-slogging past a shell hole which a French marine is trying to fill in. A Red Cross Ambulance has right of way.

At the end of their long and terrible march, during which some of the troops had covered as much as thirty miles in a day, British soldiers are here seen passing through Dunkirk towards their final goal—the sands where a long ordeal of waiting must be endured before they could be taken off to the rescue fleet. Wrecked buildings show that the fierce bombardment to which Dunkirk was subjected had already begun.

Photos, Service Cinématographique de la Marine, Section Cinéma de l'Armée, and Associated Press

250,000 Soldiers 'Walked the Plank'—to Safety

In earlier pages we have told something of the heroic episode of the Dunkirk evacuation of several hundred thousand men of the B.E.F. and of the French Army which shared their glory. Now we give an account of the rescue in the words of Vice-Admiral Bertram Home Ramsay, whose brilliant services as commander of the naval forces operating from Dover were recognized on June 7 by the award of the K.C.B.

WHEN it was mooted that the B.E.F. might have to fall back on the Channel Ports it did not seem too bad, as they had about five ports to fall back on.

We discussed what type of ships should be used, and found that it was possible to put 1,200 men in a little destroyer packed like sardines. The ordinary cross-Channel steamer could take about 2,000 men, but that was not enough to keep the thing going, and we obtained a large number of Dutch motor vessels of between 500 and 1,000 tons which had been left in British ports after the invasion of Holland. A number of coasters and other craft, including paddle steamers, were also obtained.

Our first job was to evacuate Boulogne, and this was done entirely by six destroyers working from 5.30 p.m. until about 3 a.m. They brought off 4,600 soldiers without any preparation, under fire from shore batteries, heavy aerial attacks, and machine-guns and snipers at every point. The captain in charge of the flotilla was sniped and shot on his bridge. That was the end of Boulogne.

Troops were sent to Calais and ordered to hold on to the last, which they did gallantly. Bombs and shells from shore batteries made Calais untenable; we could not send in supplies or bring off the wounded.

It was horrible to be so close and yet to be so powerless to help them.

THEN it was decided that we must get the B.E.F. out as quickly as possible, and so this organization at the Admiralty was suddenly put into force. I was told by telephone to get out as many as could be taken in 48 hours.

On Sunday, May 26, we started evacuation. About 20 officers and 180 bluejackets came down from the Admiralty. They had no idea what they had come for until given instructions and sent to Dunkirk.

They were bombed all the way. At Dunkirk they were bombed all afternoon. They had a really good opening scene.

We set aside a room here with about seven telephones and 15 or 16 fellows working in it. Most operations are given a name nowadays. This one became known as the Dynamo Operation. I don't know who thought of the name, but I can't imagine a better one.

After three or four days the men working there were so tired that they were just lying down behind their chairs on beds, mattresses, or even on the floor and falling fast asleep.

As they woke up they carried straight on with their work. Most of the men in the "dynamo room" were juniors, and when they had any difficulty they talked to their seniors in a way that was a pleasure to hear.

They allowed nothing and nobody to stand in the way.

AFTER a couple of days it became clear that this was a bigger show than any one had imagined. The numbers we were going to get off were going to be bigger than had been thought possible. It was not only an evacuation of the B.E.F. but of the French northern army as well.

The enemy decided that we should not be allowed to evacuate these armies, and sent over hordes of bombers, literally hundreds. They made Dunkirk dock a shambles.

The whole place was on fire, and the heat was so great that no troops could come down to the docks.

The only part of Dunkirk harbour where a ship could go alongside was a narrow pier or breakwater on wooden piles—a place never intended in the wildest imagination for such a purpose as ours. Eventually something like 250,000 men came off this pier. The use of it was the inspiration of our fellows at Dunkirk. Captain Tennant, in charge of operations there, and his men guided the men to the ships. Without them the troops would have been like lost sheep.

There were no gangways. Narrow mess-tables were put across for gang-planks from the pier to the ships. **About a quarter of a million soldiers walked the plank to safety, mostly in the dark and most of them so tired that they could hardly drag their legs.**

IT became obvious that we must embark also from the beaches. We used the stretch of beach extending eight or nine miles from Dunkirk to La Panne.

After a couple of days all our landing parties were exhausted. They had had no sleep; we had every day to draw on another 100 men and, if possible, 50 more boats. We had denuded our harbours at home, yet the cry was continually for more men and more boats. The reason was that many of these boats were lost on the way over.

About May 29 or 30 it seemed that we were getting away men in better numbers than had been thought possible—from 13,000 the first night to 20,000 the second and 45,000 the third. We began to think we might do a big thing, so we asked the Admiralty **to raise every single craft possible within 24 hours. The response was quite astonishing.**

I do not quite know how the Admiralty got such a move on, but hordes of these little vessels arrived. They were manned by civilians mostly, and a certain number by naval ratings. The total numbers were anything from 500 to 800, and as boats were sunk or abandoned the crews took to others and carried on with their jobs. In the end these craft saved thousands off Dunkirk beach, their crews acting mostly on their own initiative.

Our peak day was 66,000 men taken off, but that was only gained at the expense of casualties to our craft.

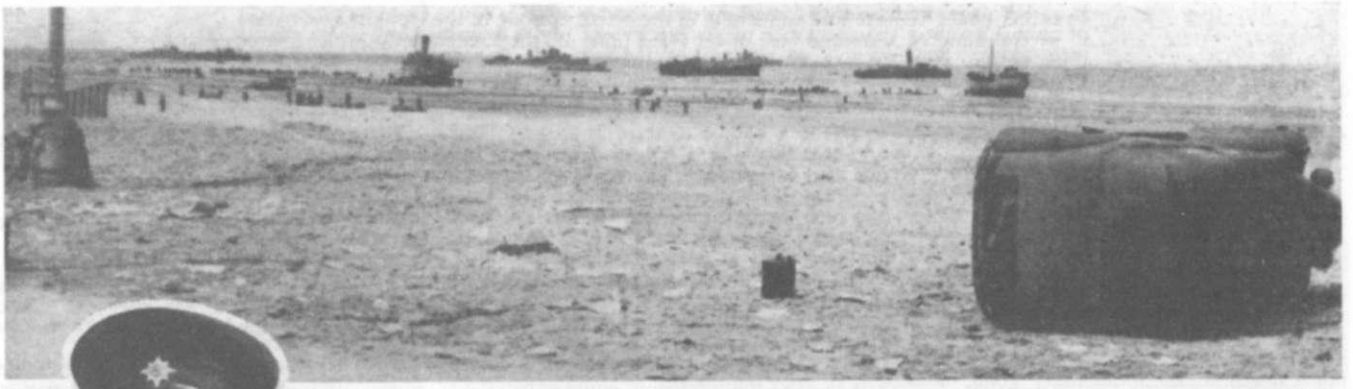
The Germans mounted heavy batteries commanding the direct route passing near Calais. We had to take a new route, which meant a round journey of 175 miles as against 76 miles. Then the Germans brought up batteries commanding this route and we had to find a third which had never before been used. This ran across sandbanks and had to be buoyed and swept before we could use it. After this the Germans brought up still more batteries and daylight evacuation became impossible. The rate of evacuation dropped from 66,000 to 30,000 a day.

This job was made possible only by the extraordinarily fine ship handling and the amazing endurance of the men engaged.

The organization of the great Armada of ships of all kinds from destroyers to motor boats that brought off the men from Dunkirk was the work of Admiral Bertram Ramsay, right, who was recalled from retirement at the beginning of the war. Below, some of the little cabin cruisers, which, manned by yachtsmen, did excellent work, are being towed up the Thames on return.

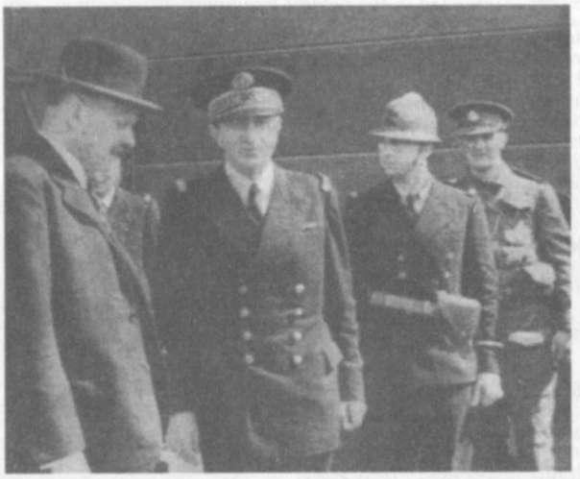
Photos, "Daily Mirror"

There Were None but Heroes at Dunkirk

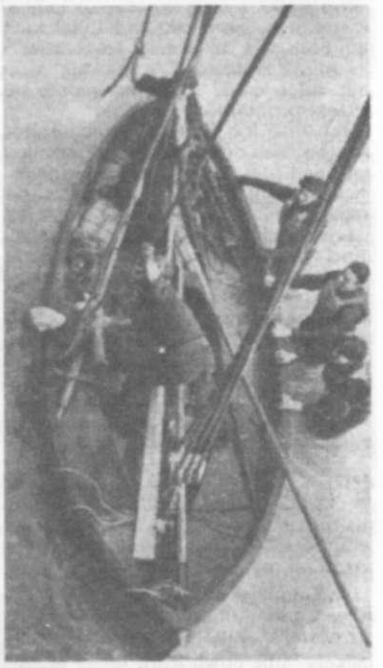


Transports evacuating men from the beaches at Dunkirk had to lie about half-a-mile off, owing to the shallow water, and the soldiers waded out to the shallow-draught ships or boats that took them to the larger craft.

Major-General the Hon. H. R. L. Alexander, the "less senior officer" to whom Lord Gort handed over the command at Dunkirk, is one of the youngest Major-Generals in the Army.



Admiral Abrial, one of the heroes of the Dunkirk evacuation, is here seen in the town a few days before he left. With him is the French Ambassador to Belgium.



Small boats were employed to carry the wounded men from the beach at Dunkirk to ships on board which they could get medical attention. One of them is here being slung on board.

AFTER Dunkirk the King sent the following message to the Prime Minister: "I wish to express my admiration of the outstanding skill and bravery shown by the three Services and the Merchant Navy in the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Northern France. So difficult an operation was only made possible by brilliant leadership and the indomitable spirit among all ranks of the Force. The measure of its success—greater than we had dared to hope—was due to the unfailing support of the Royal Air Force and, in the final stages, the tireless efforts of naval units of every kind."

One of the strangest of the craft that took part in the evacuation was the "Massey Shaw," the most powerful fire float of the London Fire Brigade. Manned by a Naval lieutenant and a volunteer crew, she crossed to Dunkirk and brought home 60 men; returning, she ferried 500 men from shore to ship and then came back to England with another load. Left, she is seen returning to her berth in London. Right are sailors from Dunkirk leaving a London terminus in a lorry. They were the last naval party to leave.

Photos, G.P.U., Elliott & Fry and Wide World

ENTER ITALY'S GANGSTER AND HIS GUNMEN

Mussolini's Masterstroke of Crime

By The Editor

June 10, 1940

THE above heading was jotted down by me nearly three weeks ago. The reflections which I now print had taken shape long before then. Almost alone in a fairly wide circle of publicists, I have believed that this foul product of the Milan gutter would do the thing that he has done. But as a commentator on the War I have observed as nearly as my temper would allow the behest of our Ministry of Information not to criticize too outspokenly the leaders of neutral nations . . . or even "non-belligerents."

At best my opinion could have remained only an opinion. My grounds for it were largely psychic . . . a personal loathing of the man and a dislike and distrust of his comic opera son-in-law Ciano (who, when he was publicity manager for Italy, reserved three seats in any government 'plane to take me anywhere I wished in touring Italy—a favour I eventually declined as it came too near the time of Sanctions). But I find these personal revulsions worth remembering. I knew little or nothing about Gamelin at the outbreak of the War until I read a number of highly favourable French appreciations of him; but my heart fell when I saw the figure in which France had so tragically put her trust. And my heart was right. So, too, the picture of Hitler and his "great friend Benito Mussolini," shaking hands and slyly smiling to each other after the Munich coup, has never left my mind. Two villains shaking hands on their villainies past and prospective! My misgiving then is justified today.

Bruno, the Assassin of Peasants

WHEN I was in France in February of last year I read Bertrand Russell's great and gloomy book "Power," and later quoted an extract which it contained from a confession of a beastly Italian assassin, Bruno Mussolini, one of Benito's brood. He was an airman in the glorious conquest of Abyssinia. He describes how he bombed the poor defenceless inhabitants and their animals. Listen to the words of the de-humanized youth:

"We had set fire to the wooded hills, to the fields and little villages. . . . It was all most diverting. . . . The bombs hardly touched the earth before they burst out into white smoke and an enormous flame and the dry grass began to burn. I thought of the animals. God, how they ran. . . . After the bomb-racks were emptied I began throwing bombs by hand. . . . It was most amusing: a big zariba surrounded by tall trees was not easy to hit. I had to aim carefully at a straw roof and only succeeded at a third shot. The wretches who were inside, seeing their roof burning, jumped out and ran off like mad. Surrounded by a circle of fire, about 5,000 Abyssinians came to a sticky end. It was like hell."

There speaks an Italian of the vilest type. There are millions of others who would be, and are worthy to be, our friends and the friends of all peaceable folk. In the younger generation, however, the ancient strain of cruelty, which dates back to the brutalities of the Roman arena, has been sedulously developed under the Fascist rule. But assassination is a characteristic of the Italians outside of Lombardy and the north-west. Where Signora Mussolini spawned her little Bruno I do not know but, like his father (born in the north-east), he is a cowardly assassin . . . like millions of the baser Italians through the ages. One A.A. gun against him and he would not have found his job so "diverting."

An eminent American writer who had seen most of the Spanish Civil War at close quarters gave it as his reasoned opinion that the only conditions in which the Italian fighters on land or in the air showed the slightest courage was when these conditions made assassination easy. An English journalist who also saw most of the Civil War assured me that poorer stuff than the Italian infantrymen could not be found in Europe: they were held in contempt by Franco's men as much as by the Republicans. I unreservedly accept both judgements. The rabbits that ran at Caporetto will run as swiftly when the French or British who saved them then are matched against them now. As guitarists they are charming, but not even the years of schooling in militarism which Fascist fanatics have given them can have changed their theatricals into the grim resolution of men prepared to fight and to suffer. Time, I prophesy, will prove this no offhand opinion.

For years Mussolini has been no more than a mammoth windbag, supported by lesser gasbags, and he may have done the world his greatest service in deciding to throw his unhappy country into the European inferno at this juncture. Allied naval power will soon show him who may call the Mediterranean "mare nostrum." For the powerful Allied forces which for nine months have been held immobile in that region by the bluster and bombast and trickery of this meanest traitor to civilization will be more profitably occupied in deflating these windbags than in keeping watch upon them.

IN these pages I have already given it as my opinion that the entry of Italy into the war would mean an end to the artificial New Roman Empire. I reaffirm that today, though there will no doubt be sundry initial successes for the Italians and the days of the war will be lengthened in consequence. Not all the 70,000 Italians (mainly working people) in Tunisia are Fascists, but there are Fifth Columns of Fascists in the Mediterranean colonies of France that must give the Allies immense trouble in the coming campaign; and in Spain, also. In the early days of the Spanish War, when Italian "volunteers" were being shipped at Cadiz in tens of thousands, Mr. H. N. Brailsford wrote that "the Second World War has now begun." How right he was!

At no time in their history have the modern Italians been capable of victory against any formidable foe: there would have been no united Italy but for French and British help. The name of Italy would still have been geographical and not national had the people of the historic peninsula been left to their native resources. It will again be known only to geography, thanks to this evil genius of the Milan cafés, this mouthing agitator whom the disturbances of 1922 threw into a position of power too great for him to occupy with true greatness.

Let us remember that the Italian of today has as little inherited the splendid qualities of the Romans, who before our era had conquered the world and held it marvellously to its good during the first three centuries A.D., as the degenerate Indians of Peru have inherited the astonishing civilization of the Incas or the modern Macedonians are the true heirs of Alexander. I have frequently used the very words which Mr. Duff Cooper used tonight in his brilliant broadcast, to the effect that the Nazis will find the Fascists more of a liability than an asset in the later phases of the war, and I take comfort in the entry of the Italian gangster and his gunmen upon the stage of the world drama in the belief that he has been encouraged to make his military debut at this moment of time not so much by his own choice as from the urgency of the appeal of his master in the vile co-partnership of the Axis who, having bent his bow to the utmost of his strength, may feel the need of extra legions to support his arm . . . and even such poor stuff as Italian legions are made of may temporarily help.

King Victor Emmanuel, seen here with his "Keeper," Signor Mussolini, in Northern Italy, made strenuous efforts to prevent his people's entry into the war, but was overborne and made to comply with the Duce's policy.

Photo, Keystone

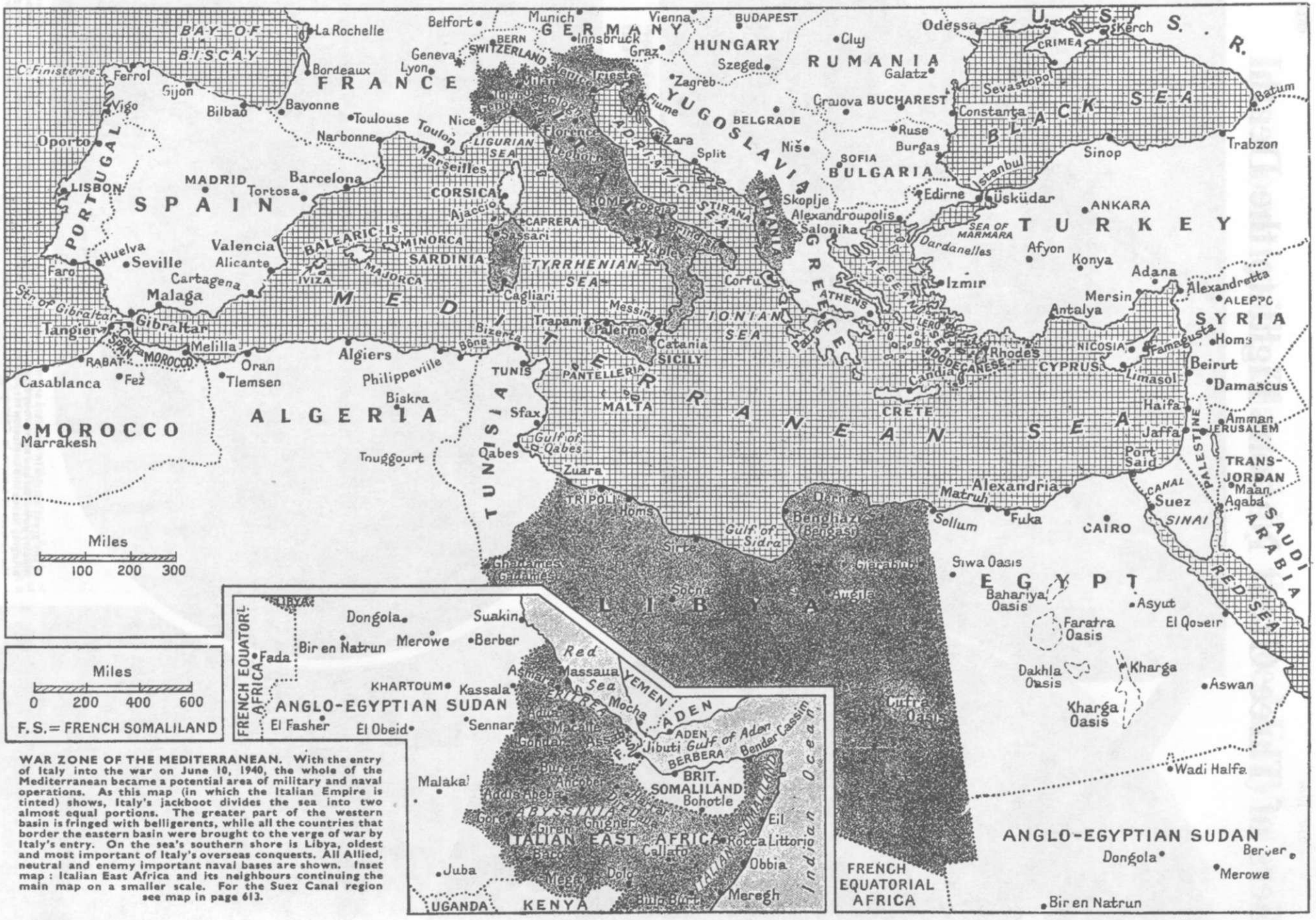
In September, 1937, when this photo was taken in Munich, Mussolini was paying a short visit to Hitler. At its conclusion he said: "All Europe is asking what will be the result of our meeting. . . . The Fuehrer and I can answer, 'Peace!'"

Photo, International Graphic Press

In a Countryside Blasted by the Red Fury of War the Soldiers of Three

During the great German offensive, many villages in Northern France found their rural peace rudely disturbed by mechanized units rumbling over the cobblestones. This lorry and anti-tank gun are British, but only too often the visitors formed part of the Nazi "armoured scythe."

Circle, a French mobile anti-aircraft gun in action.



WAR ZONE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. With the entry of Italy into the war on June 10, 1940, the whole of the Mediterranean became a potential area of military and naval operations. As this map (in which the Italian Empire is tinted) shows, Italy's jackboot divides the sea into two almost equal portions. The greater part of the western basin is fringed with belligerents, while all the countries that border the eastern basin were brought to the verge of war by Italy's entry. On the sea's southern shore is Libya, oldest and most important of Italy's overseas conquests. All Allied, neutral and enemy important naval bases are shown. Inset map: Italian East Africa and its neighbours continuing the main map on a smaller scale. For the Suez Canal region see map in page 613.

On a Gambler's Throw Mussolini Stakes His All

For nine months from the outbreak of the Second Great War Mussolini was "willing to wound and yet afraid to strike." On June 10, as we tell below, he deemed the hour had come for a felon blow at France and France's firm ally, Britain.

FOR nine months Mussolini sat on the fence. Italy, he was careful to declare, was not neutral in the sense that she was indifferent whether the war were won by Germany or by the Allies; she was, on the other hand, non-belligerent, as Ciano phrased it. She had every desire that Germany should win, and at the appropriate time she would intervene in the struggle to play her part and so stake out a claim for her share of the spoils of victory.

From day to day, week to week, the hour of decision was postponed, but at last it struck. At 6 o'clock on the afternoon of June 10 the Duce appeared on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia in Rome and announced to a wildly cheering crowd of young Fascists that "the hour marked out by destiny is sounding in the sky of our country," and that the declaration of war had been already handed to the ambassadors of Britain and France.

Mussolini may have chosen the hour, deeming it peculiarly politic to stab a friendly neighbour in the back when she was at death grips with a vastly superior foe. Or he may have had the hour chosen for him, since Hitler may well have thought that, with the French still holding fast to their line before Paris, something should be done to prevent them reinforcing their divisions by men drawn from their garrisons in the Alps. To a disciple of Machiavelli the stroke was well timed; certainly it had to do with France's distress rather than with any fresh grievance suffered by a long-complaining Italy.

War at Hitler's Behest

What, indeed, were Italy's grievances? Of what, indeed, did she complain? Count Ciano did not know, apparently, for when M. François-Poncet put the question to him on that afternoon of war, Italy's Foreign Secretary evaded a direct answer, merely replying that Signor Mussolini was only carrying out the engagements entered into by him with Hitler. But not in any of the speeches made by the Duce in the eventful years that have passed since Italy under his guidance set her heart on an imperial crown, not even in that impassioned declaration of June 10, was there ever a concrete claim, a definite demand. Always the talk was of "chains" and "strangling," of a "young and fruitful people" struggling against the "decadent and sterile pluto-democracies."

So it was that at midnight of June 10 a state of war came into being between Italy and the two countries without whose aid, moral and material, without whose firm friendship, United Italy could never have been born. As Mr. Duff Cooper was swift to remind the world, it was the guns and red-trousered infantry of the French Emperor Napoleon III which shattered the Austrian hosts at Magenta and Solferino in 1859, and it was Britain who through all the years, the long years, of persecution provided a safe harbourage and boundless encouragement for Mazzini, Garibaldi, and their fellow patriots. But these things belong to the past, that ancient past which Mussolini was now doing his best to forget, and make others forget; the things he remembered best were the handclasps and the words that passed in that little station in the Brenner three months before.

What Italy Flings into the Scales

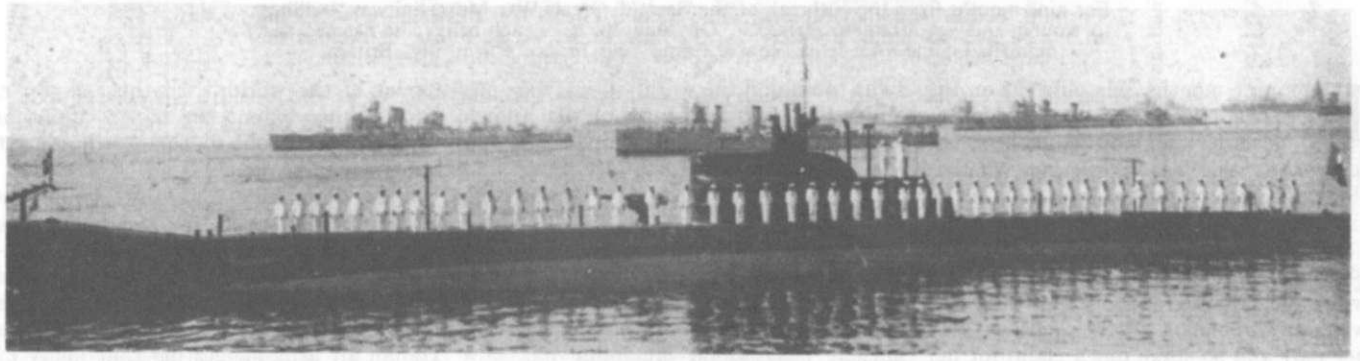
In all the capitals speculation was rife as to the aid which Italy might bring to her partner of the Axis. On paper, at least, her contribution was seen to be formidable enough. Mussolini had boasted of the "forest of 8,000,000 bayonets, well-sharpened and gripped by intrepid youths," and for some time past 1,500,000 Italians had been under arms. There was also his Air Force, consisting of, so it was said, 4,000 'planes, of which the front-line establishment was 1,400. Finally, there was the Italian Navy, which ranked fifth amongst the navies of the world. All this on paper, but to what extent the paper valuation would be borne out by the cold hard fact remained to be seen.

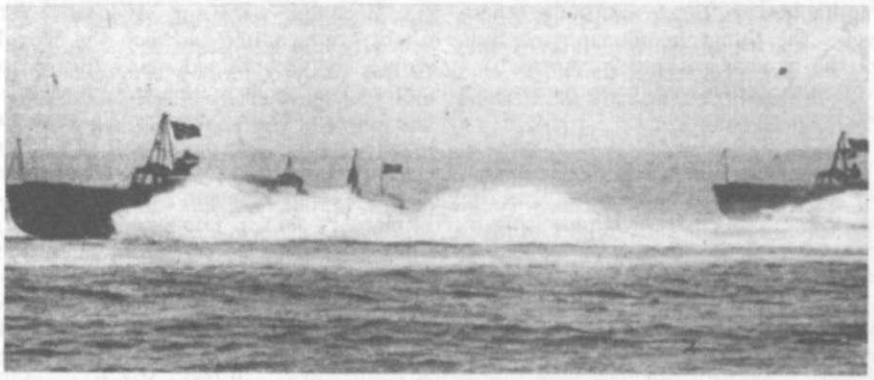
Some there were who spoke dubiously of the terrific strain on Italian finances which had been imposed by the maintenance of even a million or so men under arms. Others were inclined to disparage the quality if not the quantity of the Italian air arm, suggesting that many of the machines were out of date. Yet others, while admitting that the Royal Italian Navy contained many fine ships and was particularly rich in submarines and torpedo craft, yet argued that in naval warfare, even more than in war on the land and in the air, the importance of the human element cannot be overestimated. To win Trafalgars, in a word, something more is necessary than fine ships; something more, even, than brave and experienced seamen—what is vital is that combination of natural daring and inherited tradition which make up what we are proud to call "the Nelson touch."

Whatever the access of force that Italy's entry brought to her foes the Allies were undismayed. "In the Mediterranean even more than anywhere else," said M. Reynaud, "the Allies are strong." Already in face of the threat to Paris the

The Italian Army is not strong in tanks, and of those it possesses the heavier type is unsuited to mountainous country. Part of its mechanized force consists of such small machines as this, armed with machine-guns. Climbing a mountain side its position is nearly vertical. This is one of the type which the Italians employed in the Spanish Civil War. *Photo, Dorien Leigh*

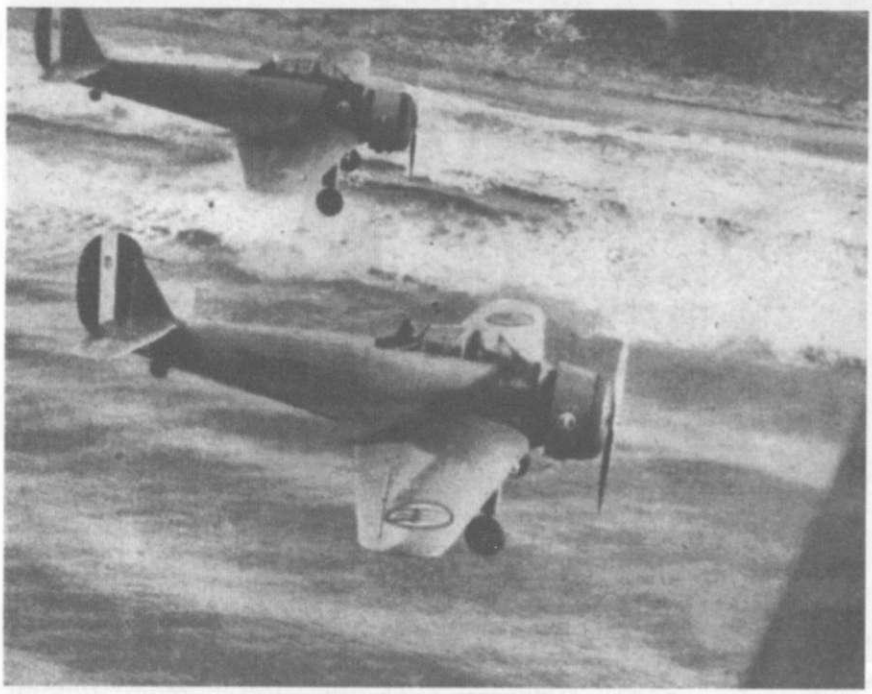
Italy Hopes to Win—'With Germany's Help'!





Italy has several classes of submarine, ranging in displacement from about 340 to 1,350 tons; one of the larger type is seen at the top. In the background are a destroyer, the "Saeta" (top), the torpedo boat "Irrequieto," and another torpedo craft. Italy has gone in largely for fast motor torpedo boats such as those in the lower photograph, intended for use in the Adriatic They are very fast, of about 36 tons, and have four tubes. *Photos, Keystone and Planet News*

Allies had shortened their battle line by withdrawing their troops from Narvik—from a position, in a word, which only a false regard for prestige would urge them to maintain; as the official statement issued in London had it, "troops and material from northern Norway can now be used to greater advantage elsewhere in the main struggle to defeat German attempts at domination." Come Italy, whether it be along the rocky ribbon of the Riviera coast road, to the islands of Corsica or Malta, or to the positions held by France's North African troops in the Tunisian deserts; wherever and whenever the Italian blows might fall, Britain and France are ready with men and guns, with 'planes and ships.



Italy's central position in the Mediterranean region, while it endows her with opportunities for striking in many directions, lays her open to many-sided attack. She has built up a large air force in consequence and this photo shows two Caproni A.P.1 two-seater, 3-gun bombers. *Photo, Keystone*

Italy's Navy: Italian Statement

From 'Tempo,' Milan, May 23, 1940

Battleships 8. *Total tonnage 235,000.*

	Tons		Tons
Cavour	23,622	Cesare	23,622
Doria	24,000	Duilio	24,000
Littorio	35,000	*Roma	35,000
Impero	35,000	Vittorio Veneto ...	35,000

* Now ready for launching. The work of modernising the Cavour is completed, whilst the renovation of the Doria and Duilio is proceeding.

Battle Cruisers 7. *Total Tonnage 70,000.*

Trento, Trieste, Bolzano, Zara, Pola, Fiume, Gorizia. Each 10,000 tons.

Light Cruisers 28. *Total Tonnage 137,000.*

	Tons		Tons
Taranto	3,184	Montecuccoli ...	6,941
Bari	3,248	Attendolo	
Alberto da Giussano	5,069	Eugenio di Savoia	7,283
A. Da Barbiano ...		Duca d'Aosta ...	
B. Colleoni			
G. dalle Bande Nere		Garibaldi	7,874
Diaz		Duca degli Abruzzi	
Cadorna			

In course of construction, 3,500 ton cruisers: A. Regolo, S. Africano, C. Mario, C. Silla, P. Emilio, P. Magno, O. Augusto, C. Druso, V. Agrippa, C. Tiberio, C. Germanico, U. Traiano. Two 8,000-ton vessels have been laid down, but names have not yet been chosen.

Destroyers 144. *Total tonnage 147,000.*

Tons	No.	Tons	No.	Tons	No.
182	1	679	16	1,206	8
635	6	670	11	1,092	8
638	2	855	5	1,383	2
642	8	862	4	1,449	4
616	7	935	4	1,526	15
623	1	967	4	1,620	12
652	6	1,058	4	1,729	4

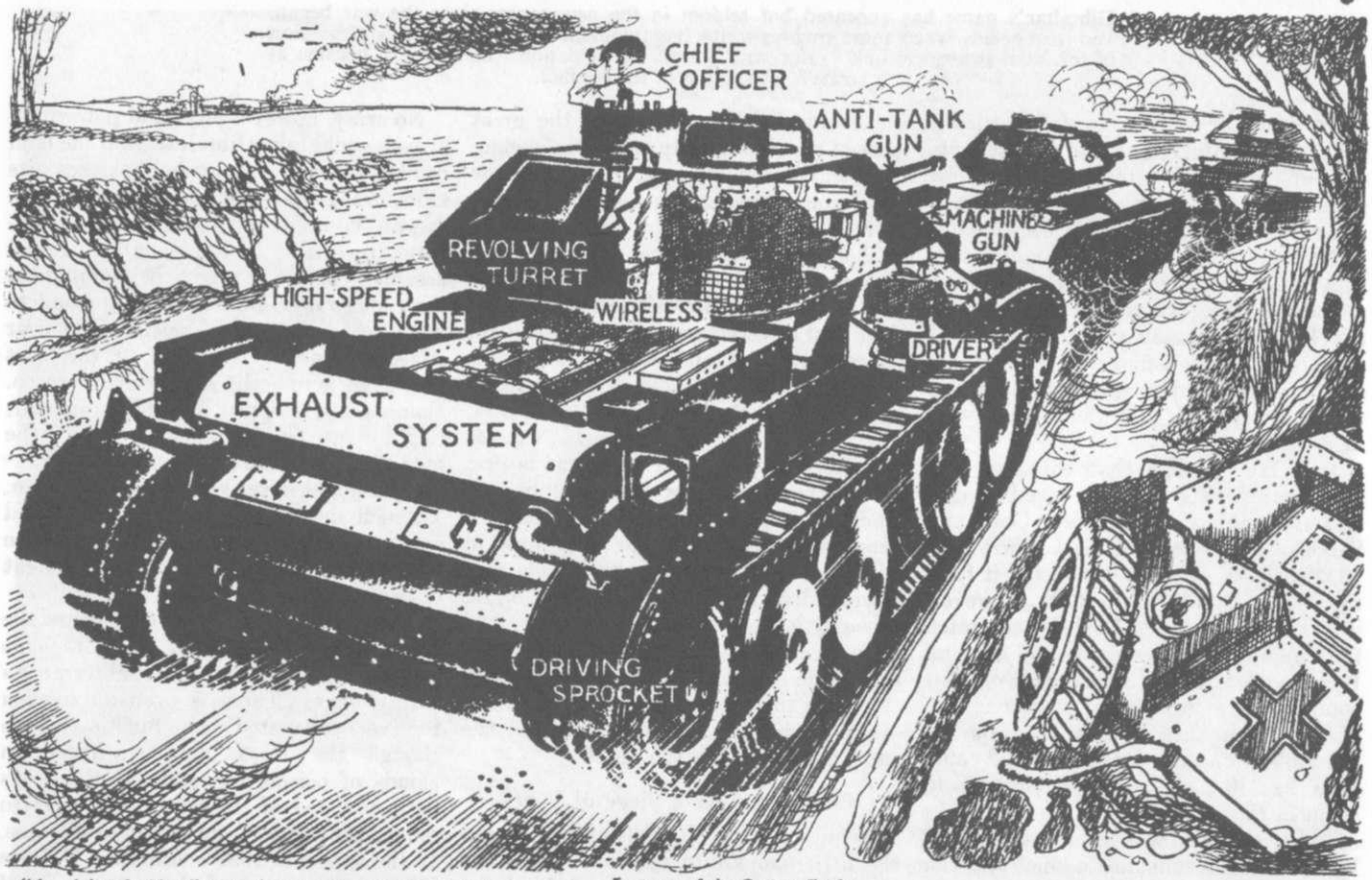
In construction, 8 of 1,500 tons; 4 of 800 tons.

Submarines 133. *Total tonnage 111,000.*

Tons	No.	Tons	No.	Tons	No.
1,369	4	1,109	3	800 (building)	6
770	7	1,036 (building)	6	640	6
880	4	951	2	615	17
941	9	1,340	8	1,371	1
336	5	810	3	389	2
599	6	1,350 (building)	6	1,061 (building)	4
591	2	856	3	1,031 (building)	4
500	10	399	1	791	4
605	4	676	2	797	2
803	2				

Total: 320 Units, 700,000 tons.

Of These 'Cruisers' Britain Cannot Have Too Many



"Land battleships" both large and small are playing a decisive part in the great battles proceeding in France. Much attention has been focused on the enormous tanks, weighing 80 to 90 tons, employed by the Nazis for their break-through and the dash to the Channel coast, but none the less important are the cruiser tanks depicted in this page. In this spirited drawing by Haworth the salient features of the British cruiser type of armoured fighting vehicle are graphically indicated.

Features of the Cruiser Tanks

Ability to manoeuvre rapidly is one of the outstanding qualities of the cruiser, which has a speed of 30 miles per hour. Its revolving gun turret, though weighing 2½ tons with gun and mounting, is so delicately poised that it can be turned round in a matter of seconds, ready to fire in any direction. Hydraulic mechanism is utilized to operate the turret, but it can be rotated by hand through a system of gears. Over rough ground these tanks can get up a speed of 15 to 20 miles per hour; they can turn in a short length and can accelerate very quickly. With its normal crew of four the cruiser tank weighs about 14 tons, and is almost as easily manoeuvred as is a motor-car.

Specially drawn by Haworth for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

Here in this Ministry of Supply factory are produced some of the immense number of armoured fighting vehicles needed for Britain's war effort. In the section illustrated, British cruiser tanks are seen in an advanced stage of assembly. The high degree of skill that made British motor-cars the equal of the best is now being applied to the building of these fighting monsters. **See also photograph page 652.**

Photo, Central Press

'Gainst Shells and Bombs 'the Rock' Makes Ready

Gibraltar's name has appeared but seldom in the newspapers since the war began, and then chiefly when some envious scribe has fulminated against Britain's possession of this vital strategical link. But with Italy's participation "the Rock" became at once a focal point of the conflict.

"GIBRALTAR is Spanish," bawled a handful of boy and girl students in the streets of Madrid a few hours before the arrival of Sir Samuel Hoare, Britain's new special Ambassador to Spain. Perhaps they had been listening to a Falangist address or were fresh from a history lesson; when they tried to enter the British Embassy the concierge told them, "You won't find Gibraltar there," and since it was just time for lunch and the weather was very hot, they soon dispersed.

It is true enough that Gibraltar was once Spanish, just as it has once belonged to Carthaginian and Roman, Goth and Saracen. The Spaniards held it first from 1302 to 1333, and finally wrested it from the Moors in 1462. In 1704, however, it was captured by an English and Dutch force under Sir George Rooke and Admiral Byng, and the British occupation was confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713. Since then it has been one of Britain's imperial bulwarks, and only once has it been seriously threatened, when in the course of the American War of Independence it was heroically defended by General Eliott against a much superior force of French and Spaniards from July 1779 until February 1783—one of the longest and most fiercely contested sieges in history. In 1783 Spain formally abandoned her claims to Gibraltar, receiving in return Florida and Minorca.

Geographically speaking, Gibraltar is just a big rocky promontory about three miles in length reaching out into the Straits—only eleven miles wide—which separate Europe from Africa. From the sea it has the appearance of a precipice, and none who has seen it, particularly in the evening light, will forget the great mass of rock looming up above the leaden-hued waters, while signal flashes and the wandering, probing fingers of the search-lights show that the Lion never sleeps.

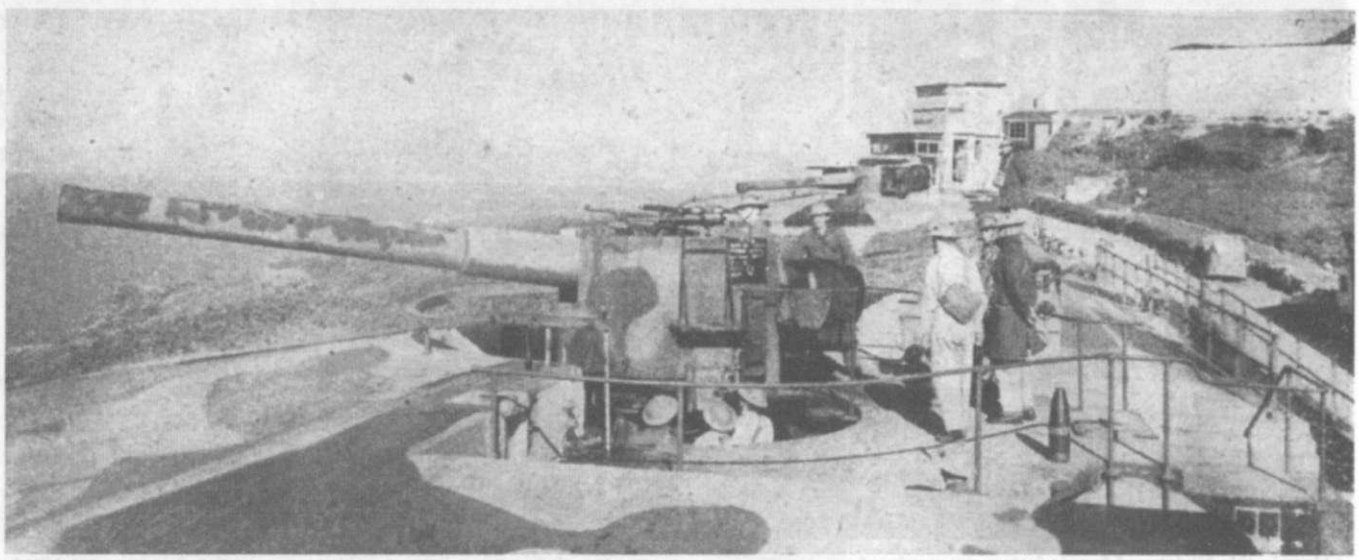
Sheltered by the massive façade is the little town of Gibraltar, where live some 17,000 civilians, British citizens all of them, but of very varied descent—Italian, Maltese, Spanish and Jew. They know English, but for the most part they speak Spanish of rather an individual kind. Their numbers are kept down as a matter of deliberate policy, for Gibraltar is first and foremost a fortress which must be ever ready to defend itself against assault; hence most of the people who work in Gibraltar in the British dockyards and arsenals live in the Spanish town of La Linea de la Concepcion—"the Lines," as it is generally called—just across the frontier in Spain. The workers come into the town in the morning, but at "first evening gunfire" they all leave and the gates are locked for the night.

Provisioned for a Siege of Years

Behind the closely packed houses and the little shops into which in peacetime the crowds of tourists pour, behind the parade of fashion—for the Gibraltar folk, despite their alien ancestry and foreign tongue, love to emulate the ways and traits of English society—is the great Mount honeycombed with galleries, with gun emplacements and soldiers' quarters, which no stranger is ever allowed to visit. In normal times the garrison consists of some 3,000 men who are charged with the defences of what still, despite all the changes wrought in recent times in the military art, is a most formidable fortress.

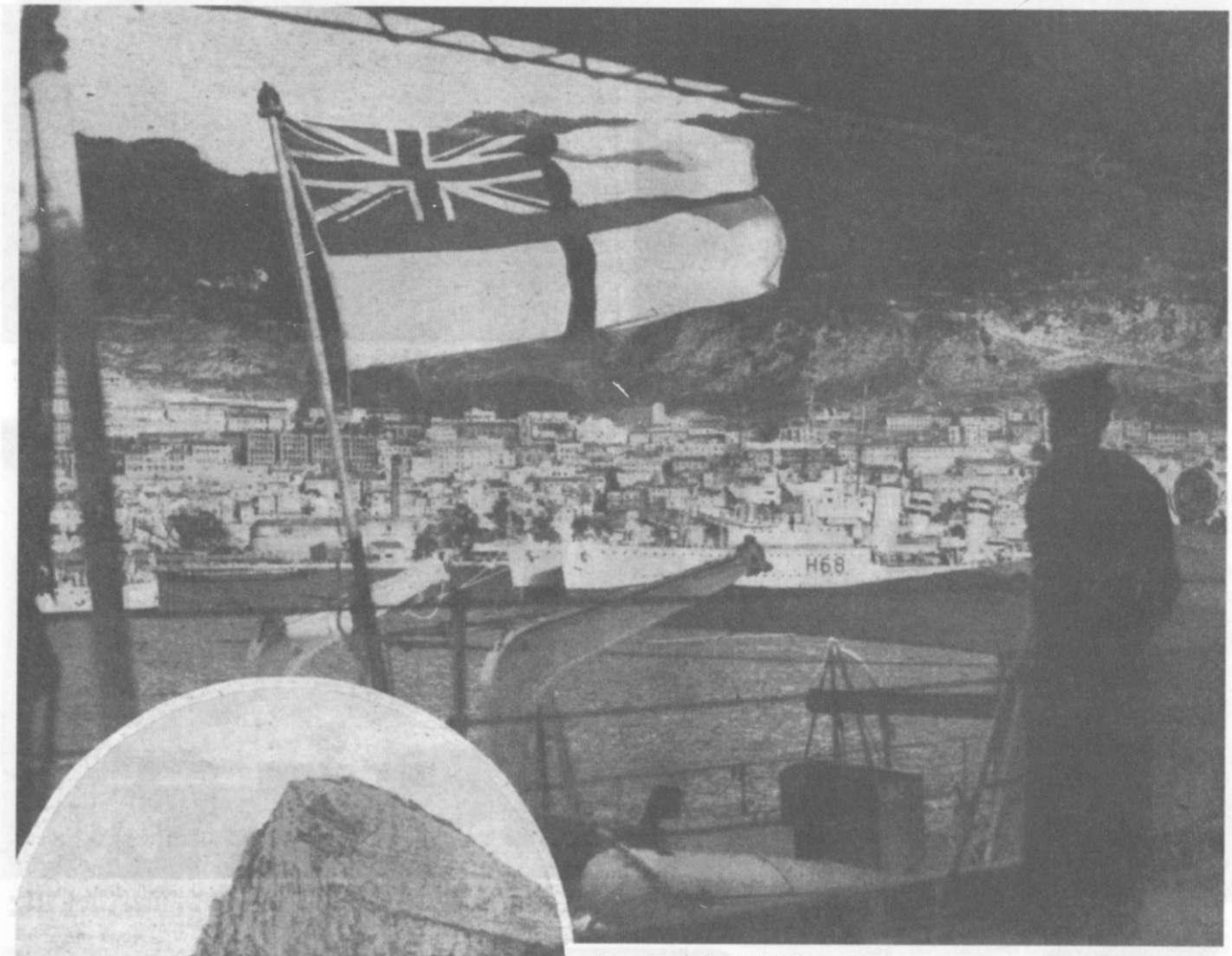
No army, however large and powerfully armed, could take Gibraltar from the land or attack it successfully from the sea; its cliffs, rising 1,200 feet above the Mediterranean, combine with an immense armament to make it impregnable against assault. True, it might be bombarded with long-range guns such as are said to have been mounted of recent years near Algeciras on the mainland to the west and even across the Straits in Morocco. Bombs, too, dropped by raiding aircraft, might cause some damage, though the men working in the casemates deep underground might never know they had fallen. To such means of attack, blockade and consequent starvation would have to be added before there could ever be a thought of capitulation.

But even against a siege of years the Rock is well provisioned, with its huge water tanks and its vast subterranean store rooms. There is even an oxygen reserve calculated to function even though the Rock were enveloped in clouds of poison gas, and the Rock has been stripped of its vegetation so as to reduce the danger from incendiary bombs. In the spring of 1939 a Gibraltar Defence Force was organized to concern itself more particularly with anti-aircraft duties, and under the direction of the Governor and C.-in-C., Lieut.-Gen. Sir Clive Liddell, every precaution is being taken by way of adding to the elaborate fortifications, the erection of anti-tank wire and the laying of land mines facing La Linea. A curfew has been imposed from 11.30 p.m., and "Fifth Columnists" made liable to the death penalty. Women and children were evacuated to French Morocco on May 21. Gibraltar is ready!

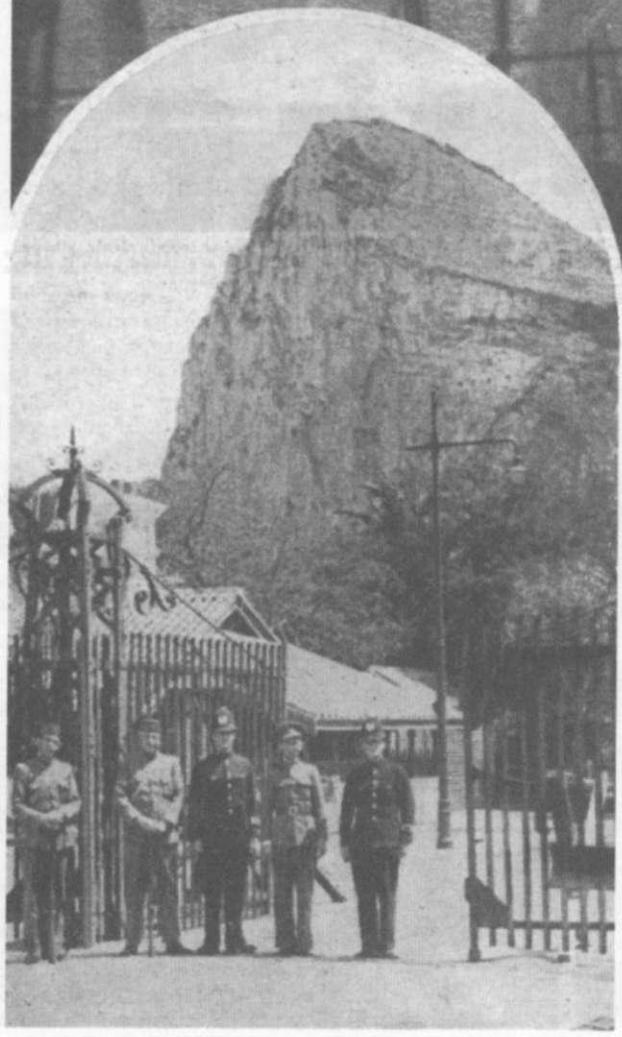


One of the coastal defence guns at Gibraltar, during wartime exercises. Supplies of ammunition, food and water to last a siege of long duration are stored in the fortress. Already formidable in its strength, "Gib" was brought to a state of even greater readiness after the crisis of September, 1938, under the Governorship of General Sir Edmund Ironside. *Photo, Central Press*

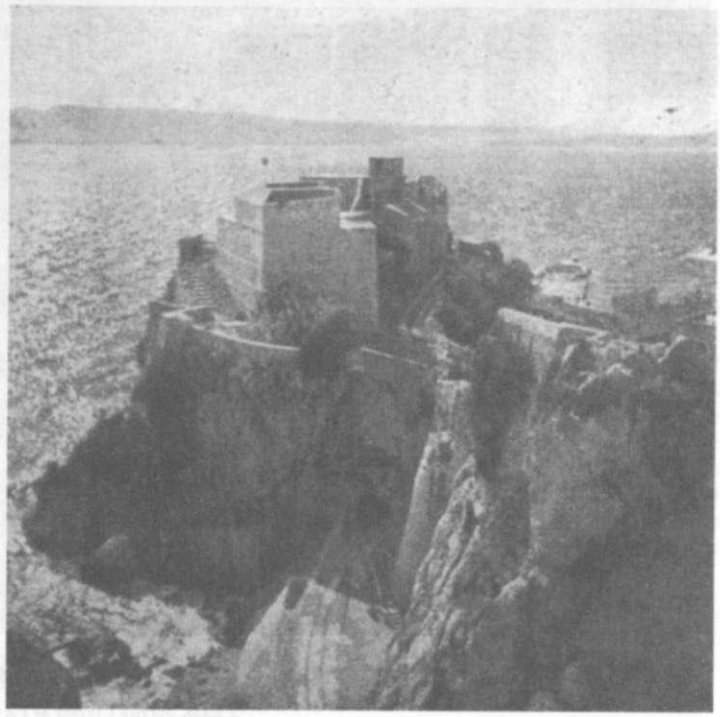
For 236 Years Britain's Flag Has Waved at 'Gib'



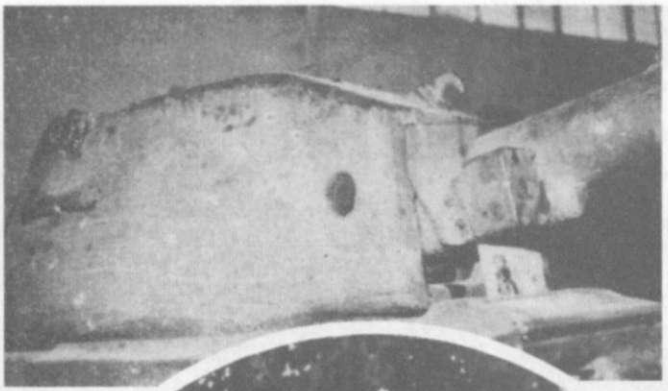
From the deck of a British warship anchored in the harbour we see the town of Gibraltar creeping, tier after tier, up the Rock's massive face. Close in shore are two destroyers of the Mediterranean Fleet. *Photos, Fox and Topical*

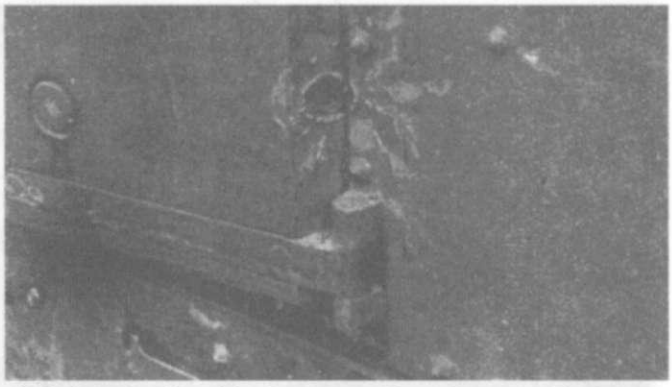


At a gate on the frontier between Spain and Britain's stronghold of Gibraltar pose for their photograph three Spanish soldiers and two of the Rock's policemen. The latter, it will be seen, wear the garb of a London "bobby." Right, an outwork of the fortress.

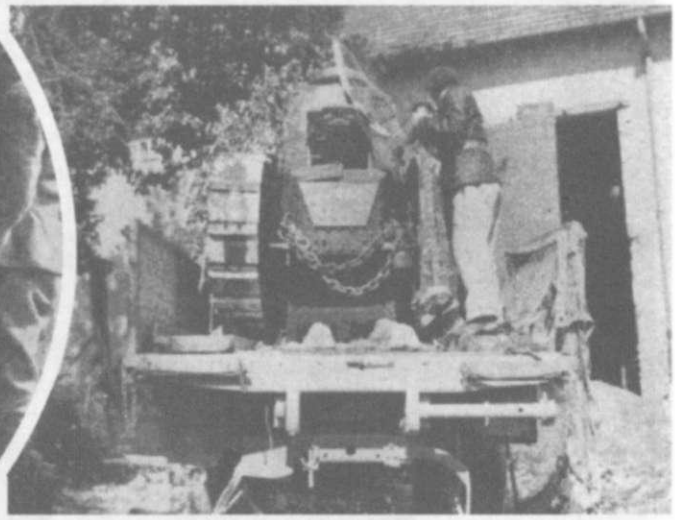


France's 'Chars d'Assaut' Kept Up to the Mark

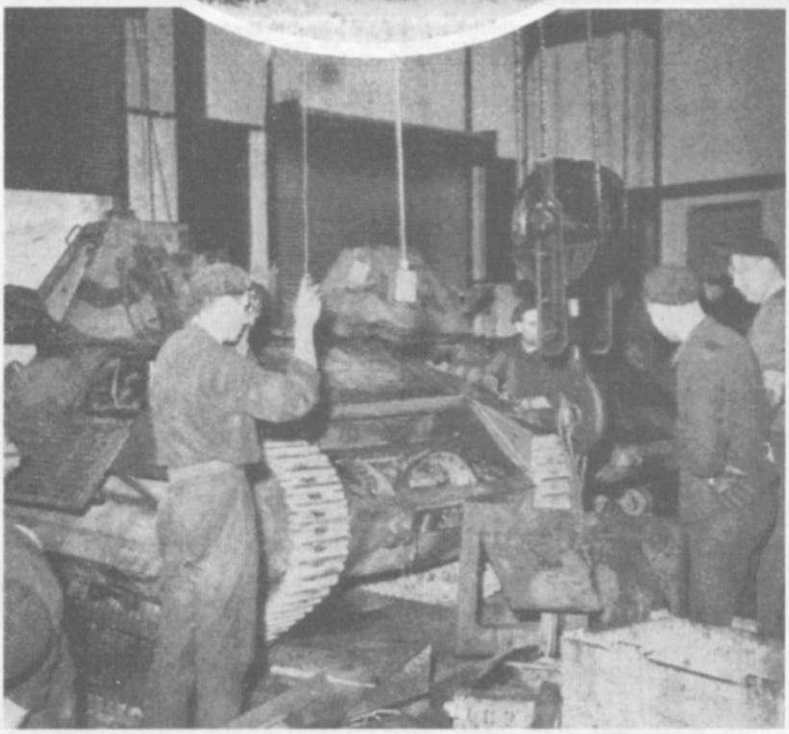




Left, the turret of a tank has been removed for replacement. The damage done by enemy projectiles can be clearly seen. The side of the tank, right, has been hit only by a small projectile, so that repairs will be easy.



When the day's work is done the tanks are parked as seen in circle, where trees afford camouflage. For repairs the tanks are taken back to the repair centres in lorries, as shown above.



All tanks must undergo periodic overhauls, and a large body of skilled mechanics is attached to the French Tank Corps for this work and to carry out repairs. Some of the photographs in this page show such activities. Left is a light tank brought in for a thorough overhaul. Right, a French tank that has run short of fuel is "borrowing" a fresh supply by siphoning it from a touring car.

Photos, Service Cinéma de l'Armée and Wide World

Eye Witness Stories of Episodes and Adventures in the Second Great War

Our Fellows Were Firing as the Ship Sank

Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, the little article below tells of the experiences of Mr. H. J. Dearing, of the British destroyer "Keith" in the Dunkirk evacuation. Before meeting her end in these operations, H.M. Destroyer "Keith" had done yeoman service at Rotterdam and in the evacuation of Boulogne.

WHEN we arrived off Dunkirk—this was on Thursday, May 30—they had already started the evacuation. There seemed to be thousands of ships of all kinds, even lifeboats, and the beaches were crowded with men. We managed to get within about a quarter of a mile of the shore, and as soon as we got there the admiral who had been directing operations from the land came on board and made us his flagship.

Boats kept coming alongside asking for orders, and many of the bigger boats were towing rowing-boats which were going in and taking men off from the jetty at Dunkirk and also from the beaches. The men were marching all along the sands in single file, and no sooner did we clear up one bunch than thousands more came in streams from the direction of Nieuport across the sand dunes. The little boats could bring out only about twelve men at a time, and as the destroyers had to wait until they were full, it took a long time to load up, so that most of them could make one, or perhaps two journeys in the course of the day.

We had a good view of the coast, which is very low here, with no cliffs; beyond the dunes there were a few houses and one very big building, over which the French naval guns were firing. We could not see Dunkirk itself because of the clouds of smoke, but we could see Nieuport, where the men had made a jetty of lorries so that they could get out to the boats under cover of anti-aircraft guns. A great number, however, had to swim out to the boats.

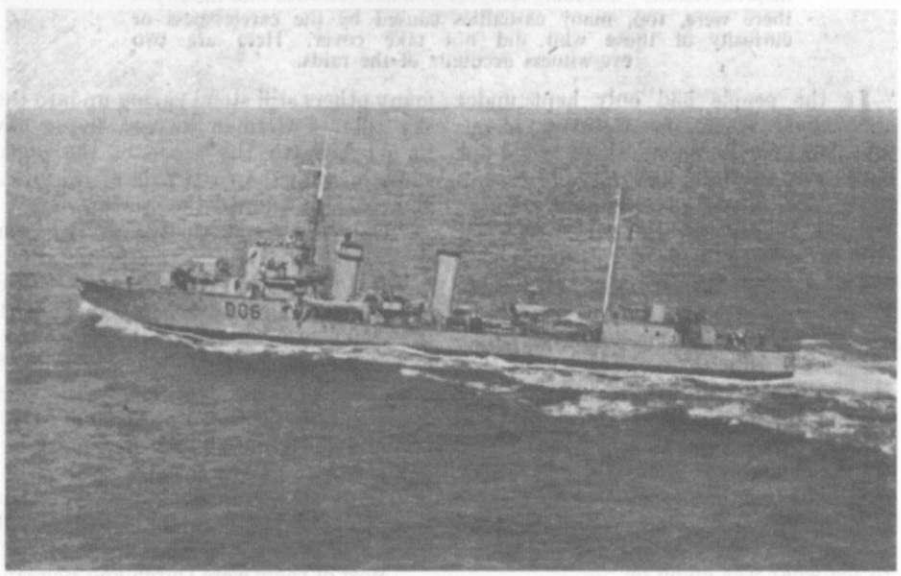
The fire was most intense. On the afternoon we got there the German 'planes were over all the time, but they didn't touch us. The German troops could not have been very far away because they opened fire every now and then, and the shell would fall amongst our men. Their 'planes came over from a northerly direction, eight or nine in a line, and so low that we could distinguish their markings quite plainly; funnily enough they were using tracer bullets in the daytime. Our men took cover and fired back with their rifles.

On Saturday the Germans started bombing attacks on the ships—there were certainly plenty of them to attack! At first we were fairly lucky. Then another wave of bombers came over one after the other in a line, and they hit us. We had a very bad list, and so we were told to prepare to abandon the ship and take to the boats. We kept the A.A. gun going all the time, and as the ship was going down our fellows were still firing the pom-poms.

Unfortunately most of our boats had been wrecked in the attack, and most of us had to take to the water. I swam away and managed to get on to a raft, where several others joined me later. The Germans hadn't done with us yet, though, for they came back while a tug was taking the men off the forecastle. They bombed the tug, and all the men on it had to swim for it and get picked up again. Some climbed on to a wreck, but the Germans saw them and came back and bombed them there, too. There must have been hundreds of 'planes which kept coming back, and when they had sunk the ships they still weren't satisfied, but would bomb us again after we had been rescued.

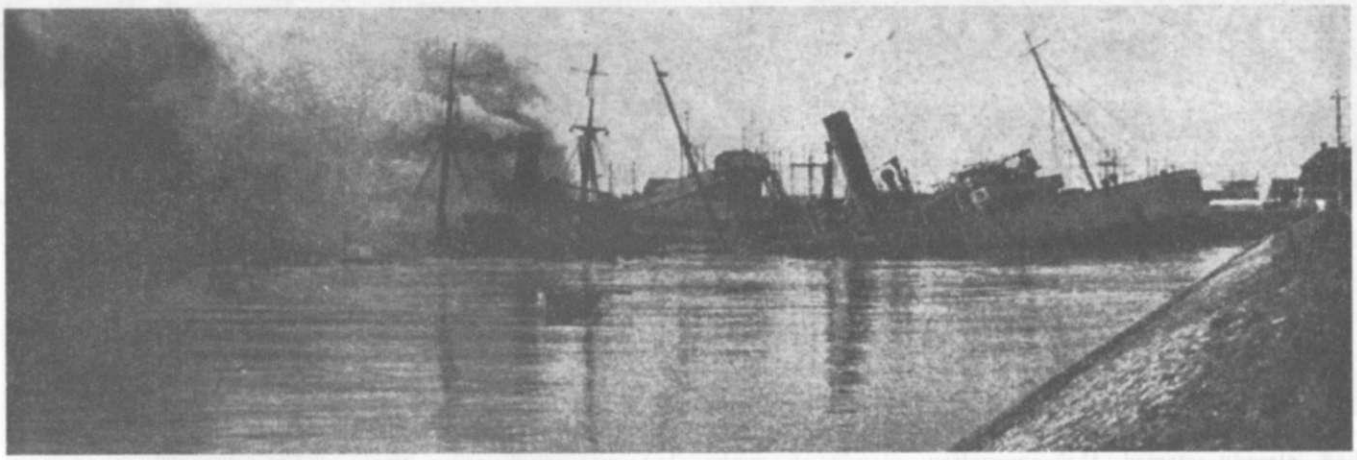
After a time a tug picked me up. Of course we had to leave everything behind, and when I finally got to port all I had on was a pair of overalls and a cork lifebelt.

On improvised jetties such as this, built from lorries, our men walked out to the boats that took them to the transports off Nieuport and Dunkirk. Here officers and men of the Royal Ulster Rifles are waiting to be picked up.
Photo, Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED



H.M. Destroyer "Keith," sunk by German bombers on June 1, 1940, during the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk. The personal narrative of a survivor is given in this page. "Keith" was an Admiralty Type flotilla leader, completed in 1931; her displacement was 1,400 tons, and her speed 35 knots.
Photo, Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

I WAS THERE!



All the Channel ports that fell into Nazi hands were rendered useless by the Allies before they left them. Here is the scene at Zeebrugge, with blockships filled with concrete sunk in the entrance to the harbour.
Photo, Fox

How We Blocked Zeebrugge Once Again

The blocking of Zeebrugge harbour on April 23, 1918, by naval units under Sir Roger Keyes was successfully emulated on May 27, 1940, when British naval forces blocked the harbour in the face of intense enemy fire without the loss of a single man. The story of how this was achieved is told here by a naval officer who took part in the action.

AN attempt at blocking Zeebrugge was made on May 25, but this proved unsuccessful, as a dredger had already been sunk across the lock, presumably by the Belgians, making navigation difficult.

Describing this first attempt, a naval officer said :

"Inside the harbour a small ship had been sent to mark the end of the pier. It came under heavy machine-gun fire at short range from both piers and the shore. The light conditions outside were good, but inside the harbour there was a thick haze, and one blockship grounded and could not get off.

"This was at the end of the channel. The other blockship was sunk beside it, and we effected a withdrawal. The operation had been a failure.

"It was at once decided to have another shot, and when we set out on May 27 we had the same plan to carry out—to sink blockships beside the lock gates at the entrance to the Bruges Canal.

"Before we got to the spot a Dornier bomber spotted us and went off presumably to report.

"When we got nearer more reconnaissance 'planes came over and were engaged by us.

"On arrival at our destination the leading blockship's helm broke down, and that looked extremely unpleasant. A small ship was sent to her aid to act as a tug, but 20 minutes later the engine-room staff had repaired the helm and she was able to carry on.

"Later the second blockship turned up, and the whole party proceeded up the harbour.

"When the leading blockship got nearer a squad of 15 Heinkels 111 bombed and machine-gunned everyone present—but they had no success, and they were heavily engaged by the ships outside.

"Again one blockship, in getting between the piers, grounded, but this time she was got off, and when she got inside beside the lock the attempt was made to blow her up.

"But when the connexion was pressed it was found that the electric cable had got caught around the propeller. This was quickly remedied and the ship blown up.

"The second ship came round, and as she was blown up she fell over on to the stern of the first one at the entrance to the lock, which is now completely shut in.

"It was now only a question of withdrawal, and the ships' companies were in pulling boats having a hectic boat race to their evacuation boats.

"They got on board safely and the whole party proceeded west at high speed. We were again attacked by another squadron of Heinkels, but there were no casualties."

The blockships, he said, had been specially designed so that they could be moved in a hurry, and they would make Zeebrugge unusable for months.

As they were on their way out after the second operation, they saw a number of Belgians on the Mole, who were so pleased with the British action that they clasped their hands above their heads and waved them in the successful boxer's sign.

We Kept Our Canteen Going at Boulogne

Boulogne suffered severely from German bombing for several days before the town was evacuated. Although there were many helpless victims—including refugees who had crowded into the city—there were, too, many casualties caused by the carelessness or curiosity of those who did not take cover. Here are two eye-witness accounts of the raids.

"IF the people had only kept under cover when the German 'planes first flew over Boulogne, there would not have been anything like so many casualties among them," was the opinion of Miss Patricia Moorhouse, who with four other British women had been running a Y.M.C.A. canteen in the centre of Boulogne until May 21.

"The first raid was on Sunday evening, and lasted till early morning," said Miss Moorhouse. "We did not realize they were coming till all the lights went out and the anti-aircraft guns opened fire.

"Policemen were blowing their whistles but you could hardly hear them for the gunfire. People, many of them half-dressed, came rushing out of their houses to see what was going on.

"Many of them were hit by shrapnel and splintered glass from windows, but many others still stood gazing up into the sky till the German 'planes, flying low to get beneath the range of the guns, came in from the coast side of the town and machine-gunned the streets.

"Only then did the people run for shelter."

For three nights Boulogne was bombed at the same hour and for the same length of time. Throughout each day Miss Moorhouse and her companions helped to feed and bandage the refugees, who were flocking into the town with wounds received from 'planes which had machine-gunned them on the roads.

"Many of them had bullet-wounds through their hands, which they had put up to protect their heads," she said.

"Most of them were Dutch and Belgians who had travelled miles in ramshackle cars or farm wagons, on bicycles and on

I WAS THERE!

foot. One car drove in with two little girls strapped to the running-boards. There had not been room for them inside.

"The townspeople were wonderful to the refugees, doing what they could to help and comfort them, in spite of their own confusion and bewilderment."

The terrible plight of the Belgian refugees in Boulogne was also described by an Associated Press correspondent.

"On my way back to England from Zeebrugge," he said, "I spent two days and a night in the Gare Maritime at Boulogne, where a vast crowd of men, women and children was waiting to get away.

"When I arrived in the city the streets were black with people. It took me two hours to struggle through the crowd to the station, which was jammed with fugitives from many miles around.

"The capture of Abbeville cut off the road to the south and the refugees were thus trapped, unable to move back against the surge of others moving down from the north.

"The German 'planes came at dusk. They attacked Boulogne station and the town with heavy bombs and low raking machine-gun fire. At dawn on Thursday (May 23) British and French destroyers moored alongside the jetty.

"The British soldiers gave us food. But there was no water, and the women were by that time hysterical.

"I watched an aerial dog-fight outside the harbour in which two enemy 'planes fell into the sea in flames. At seven o'clock three destroyers alongside the jetty opened fire on the German gun emplacements on the hill. The noise was terrific. The destroyers put the German guns out of action, and many buildings on the sea front were shelled.

"During the shelling, women, children and wounded soldiers were being embarked in the destroyers. Many were caught by enemy machine-gun fire while they were running from the platform about fifty yards to the ships.

"When I left fighting was still in progress. There must have been many killed; I know there were hundreds wounded."—("*Evening Standard*" : *Associated Press.*)

We Held Off 400 Nazis For 12 Hours

How a small garrison of twenty-six Frenchmen armed only with rifles held 400 Nazis at bay for eleven and a half hours at a farm in the Rethel area is described here by their commander, Lieutenant Gehin.

A FRENCH patrol of 25 men under a lieutenant had penetrated two miles into the German lines.

"We were on an expedition in search of prisoners," said Lt. Gehin, "and occupied a farm in the early evening. All was quiet until 3 a.m., when the word went round: 'Boche coming.' There were two companies of them, 200 in each.

"From then until 2.30 in the afternoon there was violent fighting. We divided into three groups to defend the farm buildings. One group retreated successfully after their granary was set on fire, but the second group was decimated.

"Five German machine-guns covered the farmhouse. They were fired from all directions. The Germans also had trench-mortars 100 yards away. We could hear the officer giving the range and then came the shells. They fired 110 in a short time and the roofs began falling in.

Many heroic rearguard actions were fought by the French troops during their retreat, and homesteads and farm buildings found strange occupants. Here, in a farmhouse loft, two French soldiers have established a look-out post just as Lt. Gehin's men did. On the ledge to the left of them egg bombs are ready for any attempt to rush the position. *Photo, Keystone*

"The Germans also had a small gun which was causing damage, and they were close enough to throw incendiary grenades.

"They were yelling like madmen as though in a state of mystical ecstasy.

"We kept firing at them and I myself counted 77 German dead.

"But by 6 p.m. the situation seemed desperate. Only 60 rounds were left for each rifle, and five men were wounded out of our 15. Soon, only nine were able to fire.

"I asked for a volunteer to go for reinforcements. Several came forward. I chose Corporal Leger.

"I did not expect him to get through. He had to pass the Germans and then swim the Aisne. But he managed it, though twice wounded.

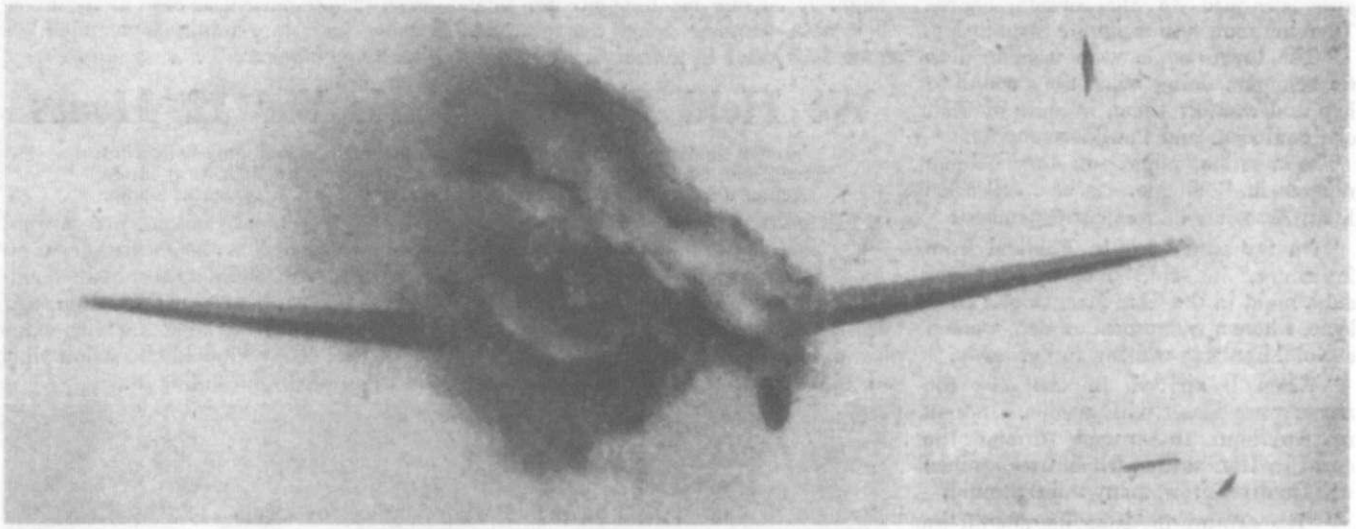
"His success brought French artillery shells landing near us as a barrage against the Germans. This cheered us.

"We continued to kill Germans right and left. Then we had the good fortune to account for their company commander. This caused confusion and they retreated. We had five rounds apiece left."

When a rescue party arrived from the French lines, Lt. Gehin with eight unwounded men got away across the Aisne, carrying six wounded comrades. The officer and his companions were decorated with the Croix de Guerre.

The harbour of Boulogne was the scene of tragic and pathetic incidents such as are described in this page, when refugees driven from their homes waited to get away. Soon afterwards streams of British wounded began to pour into the town, and some of the stretcher cases are seen here being carried on board hospital ship. *From a War Office Official Film*

War in the Air as the Victor Sees It



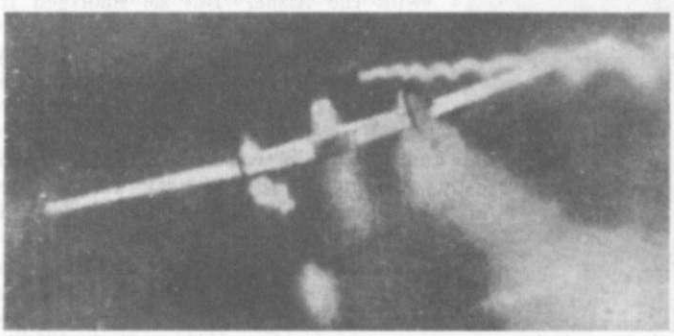
This dramatic photograph shows a Heinkel 111 diving to destruction with dense black smoke and flames pouring from its engines, fuselage and petrol tanks. The 'plane is already beginning to disintegrate. This photograph was taken by means of a cinematograph camera mounted in the wing of one of our eight-gun fighters. Considering the violent vibration and clouds of smoke this is a remarkably clear photograph and provides striking evidence of the effect of our gun-fire.

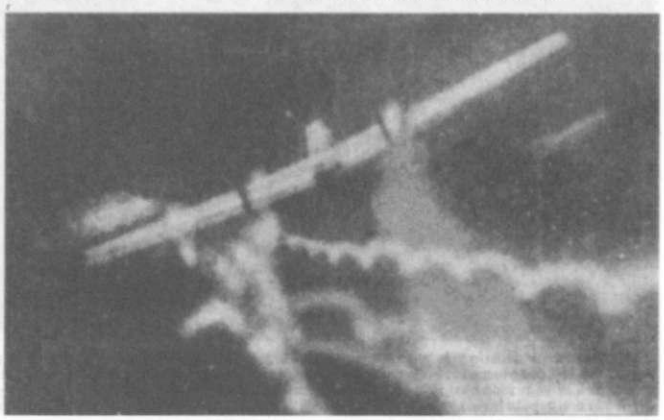
The starboard wing and engine of this Dornier 17 bomber are on fire, leaving a long trail of smoke. The machine is already doomed.

TAKEN from our Hurricanes and Spitfires, these remarkable photographs are the first authentic close-ups of aerial combat. There have been a number of exceedingly clever fakes, but none so true to life as these vivid action photographs. The cinematograph cameras used in these cases were the well-known camera guns, mounted in the wing, which are used normally for training purposes. Before air gunners have attained sufficient proficiency to use live ammunition against targets towed by another 'plane they record their "hits" on cine film by means of these photographic camera guns.

For the purpose of obtaining these photographs, however, it was arranged that the cameras are so fitted and connected that they only operate when the machine-guns are actually firing. If in some cases the photographs lack clarity it must be borne in mind that cloud condensation on the lens, vibration, and smoke make it impossible to obtain perfect results. However, these examples serve to prove the effectiveness of our concentrated eight-gun attacks. The fire-power of each of these 'planes is said to be as great as that of the entire machine-gun strength of a 1914 infantry brigade.

This is the same Dornier 17 as shown on the left. The fire has spread rapidly; the whole machine is ablaze as it hurtles earthwards.





These two photographs show a Messerschmitt 110 twin-engine fighter with both engines on fire (above) and later the result of more concentrated fire on the port engine (right). The port wing is here seen to have developed a serious flutter. *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright*

PERFIDIOUS ITALY'S STAB IN THE BACK

At 6 p.m. on June 10, 1940, Mussolini announced from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia, Rome, that Italy had that afternoon declared war upon Great Britain and France. Although this act of treachery had been foreseen, it called forth immediate and bitter condemnation from Allied spokesmen and from President Roosevelt.

MR. DUFF COOPER, Minister of Information, denounced the Duce in a scathing speech broadcast at 9 p.m. on June 10:

Mussolini, the Dictator of Italy, has declared war upon the Allies, with whom Italy fought in the last Great War and who then by their efforts saved Italy from destruction. He has timed the blow with characteristic cowardice and treachery.

He has waited until France was fighting desperately against great odds, but at last the opportunity to stab an old friend in the back, in the hour of that friend's greatest peril, has proved too strong a temptation for Mussolini to resist. It will be remembered as one of the vilest acts in history.

It is also very tragic because there is so much that we all like and admire in Italy and in the Italian people. We can be quite sure that, had they had a democratic system of government, which allowed the will of the people to prevail, they never would have entered into this war on the side of their hereditary enemies against their hereditary friends.

When a whole nation put their fate into the hands of one bad man, they become sooner or later both the accomplices and the victims of his crimes. Today the Italian people are the accomplices of Mussolini.

The foolish crowd of young Fascists who were cheering this afternoon in Rome little knew the fearful fate that awaits them. Whatever temporary successes they may achieve in the early days of warfare, they will certainly be defeated in the end. Italy has never won a war without assistance, except against the unfortunate Abyssinians, who were armed with spears against tanks, and with bows and arrows against poison gas.

The Curse of Garibaldi Descends

IN her struggle for independence in the last century, she was assisted at every turn, both by Great Britain and by France. It was French soldiers, not Italians, who drove the Austrians out of Italy. Garibaldi, the heroic Italian, registered the debt that his country owed to Great Britain when he called down a curse upon any Italian Government who, in the future, should fight against the country that had saved her. . . .

Italy, the heir of Rome, has allied herself with those very barbarians who destroyed the Roman Empire, and is assisting them in this, their second attempt, to wipe out civilization.

But we need have no fear of such an eventuality. Germany is no more likely to win the war with the assistance of Italy than she was without her. On the contrary, it is more than likely that Italy will prove a liability rather than an asset, as indeed she proved to her allies in the last War, when, after the disgraceful flight of the Italian Army at Caporetto, the British and the French had to dispatch troops in order to restore the position in Italy and put back some courage in the hearts of the Italians. . . .

NO war has ever been declared with so little provocation as this. Italy had no quarrel with Great Britain or with France, and had made no claim which had been refused. There was no subject which our two Governments were not ready to discuss, no problem that they were not anxious to solve. In the short account of what Mussolini said this afternoon I cannot find that he himself mentioned any cause for his action save that Great Britain and France were richer nations than Italy. It is the excuse of the man who breaks into another's house and cuts his throat in order to steal his money.

This indeed is the criminal act of a common murderer—the act of a man who, although he rules over a Christian people, not only loathes and despises Christianity, but makes no pretence to be bound by the ordinary laws which all civilized human beings respect. Murderers very often succeed in the first instance, for the simple reason that civilized life is carried on upon the assumption that murder will not be committed, but the end of murderers is always shameful, as that of Mussolini will be.

He will bring misery and starvation upon his people; he will leave nothing behind him but the curses of those whom he has betrayed; he will increase the number of ruins for which Italy has long been famous.

I believe that the news that Italy has joined in the war is well timed to strengthen the endurance and encourage the hearts of the French and the British people, because we know the Italians of old, and we know that, whatever other qualities they may possess, we can never fail to beat them in battle.

BROADCASTING from Paris at 7.45 p.m. on June 10, M. Reynaud, Prime Minister of France, took up the challenge of Fascism:

This very moment, when France, wounded but valiant and undaunted, is fighting against the hegemony of Germany, when she is fighting for the independence of all other peoples as well as for her own, has been chosen by Signor Mussolini to declare war on us.

How shall we judge this act? France has nothing to say. The world which is looking on will pass judgement.

You know what the attitude of the Italian Government was towards our attempts at a *rapprochement* and to our long patience. You know that repeatedly I have publicly followed the lead of my predecessors, and said that between us and Italy there are no problems which could not be solved by friendly negotiations. The highest moral authorities in the world, the Pope and President Roosevelt, have repeatedly tried, but in vain, to prevent this war, which is opposed to the Christian idea and to human solidarity.

Signor Mussolini decided that blood must flow. What was the pretext for this declaration of war? When at 4.30 this afternoon our Ambassador, M. François-Poncet, asked this question of Count Ciano, the latter replied that Signor Mussolini was only carrying out the engagements undertaken by him with Hitler.

FRANCE enters this war with a clear conscience. For her this is not a mere word. The world will perhaps soon know that moral forces are also forces. In the course of her long and glorious history France has passed through more severe trials. France cannot die.

U.S.A. Says 'Full Speed Ahead'

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT abandoned all neutrality in an address at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, which was relayed to London at 12.15 a.m. on June 11:

The people and the Government of the United States have seen with the utmost regret and grave disquiet the decision of the Italian Government to engage in hostilities.

More than three months ago Mussolini informed me that, because of Italy's determination to limit the spread of the European conflict as far as might be possible, more than 200,000,000 people in the Mediterranean had been enabled to escape the suffering and devastation of war.

I replied that Italy's desire to prevent the war spreading met with full sympathy on the part of the people and Government of the United States, and I expressed the earnest hope that this policy on Italy's part might be continued. I made it clear that in the opinion of the United States any extension of hostilities in the region of the Mediterranean might result in a still greater enlargement of the scene of conflict in the Near East and Africa, and that if this occurred nobody could foretell how much greater the extension of the war might eventually become.

Subsequently, recognizing that certain Italian aspirations might form a basis for discussions among Powers specifically concerned, I offered to send to the British and French Governments such specific indications of Italy's desires as Mussolini might wish me to transmit. . . . To the regret of humanity, the chief of the Italian Government was unwilling to accept that procedure.

On this tenth day of June 1940 the hand that held the dagger has stuck it into the back of its neighbour.

On this tenth day of June 1940 from this university, founded by the great American teacher of democracy, we send forward our prayers and our hopes to those beyond the seas who are maintaining with magnificent valour their battle for freedom.

In American unity we will pursue two obvious and simultaneous courses:

We will extend to the opponents of force the material resources of this nation, and harness and speed up the use of those resources in order that we ourselves may have the equipment and training equal to the task in any emergency.

All roads leading to those objectives must be kept clear of obstructions. We will not slow down or make a detour. All signs and signals call for Full Speed Ahead. . . .

The Jackal Sneaks Behind the Tiger

THE attitude of the British Government towards the Italian declaration of war was stated by Mr. Atlee in the House of Commons on June 11:

There is no quarrel between the Italians and the British and French peoples. Since we became a nation we have never fought the Italians. On the other hand, when Italy, so long divided and to a great extent enslaved by the Germans, sought in the 19th century to become a united nation it was British sympathy and help and French arms that enabled her to attain her desires.

Great Britain and France have all along been prepared to consider any real grievances of Italy and to right them, and have sought repeatedly to come to an agreement with Italy. **We have sought up to the last to prevent the war spreading to the Mediterranean. . . .**

Why, then, has Italy declared war? I say for completely sordid and material motives, because Signor Mussolini thinks that he sees a chance of securing some spoils at the expense of the Western democracies now that they are at grips with the brute forces of Germany.

Signor Mussolini uses the argument of the jackal that senses the possibility of getting some scraps from another beast's kill. **He puts forward the argument of the petty sneak thief who hopes to rifle the pockets of the murderer's victim. . . .**

False to the finest traditions of the Roman Empire which laid the foundations of law and order in Europe—false to the Christian Faith, false to the heritage of the culture of the Renaissance and betraying the men of the Risorgimento who struggled for freedom, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel and Cavour, who made Italy a free nation.

The Italian people are now to aid the German barbarians in their attack upon civilization. I cannot but believe that many Italians will feel shame at the role that has been thrust upon them. . . .

We are prepared to meet the challenge and give them blow for blow. The two dictators have united to destroy democracy. Democracy will answer the challenge. .

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

Wednesday, June 5, 1940

At 4 a.m. **Germans launched new offensive along Somme and Aisne** with massed infantry, tanks and aircraft. Battle became intense in regions of **Amiens, Péronne** and the **Ailette Canal.**

During night of June 4-5 Allied Air Forces carried out extensive raids into Germany, causing great damage in Ruhr and elsewhere. Oil storage tanks set ablaze at **Frankfurt** and **Mannheim.**

German raiders again attacked **Le Havre.** Six Nazi aircraft brought down by French fighters in Rouen region.

Thursday, June 6

German attack continued at all points between coast and Chemin des Dames. More than **2,000 tanks thrown against French lines.** Strong Allied resistance.

South-west of Lower Somme **German units infiltrated as far as R. Bresle,** and also near Ailette Canal. British troops holding sector on Lower Somme.

Allied Air Forces continued destruction of Rhineland railway system and factories, and made series of attacks over Somme front.

French fighter units brought down 21 enemy aircraft.

German raiders crossed East and South-East Coasts at a number of points during nights of June 5-6 and 6-7. Incendiary and high explosive bombs dropped, but damage done was slight. Seven casualties.

M. Reynaud made changes in French Cabinet, five Ministers, including M. Daladier, being dropped.

Friday, June 7

Battle along Rivers **Bresle, Somme** and **Aisne** continued with great violence. Main thrust made north and east of **Soissons,** where **Germans crossed Ailette Canal** and reached heights bordering the Aisne.

French resisted vigorously, but at some points forward elements withdrew.

Enemy attacked below Péronne with 1,000 tanks, some of which infiltrated between French strong points. Big Nazi effort to cross Aisne at **Attigny** repulsed.

Allied Air Forces continued day and night to attack enemy lines of communication and numerous targets over fighting fronts.

During night of June 6-7 formations of R.A.F. heavy bombers successfully attacked oil refineries, aerodromes, etc., in South Belgium and North-West Germany. R.A.F. fighters destroyed 15 enemy aircraft.

During night **Heinkel bomber crashed in East Suffolk.** German aeroplane, flying low, machine-gunned South-East Coast town.

Swedish steamer "Erik Frisell" sunk.

First V.C. of the war awarded posthumously to Capt. B. A. W. Warburton-Lee.

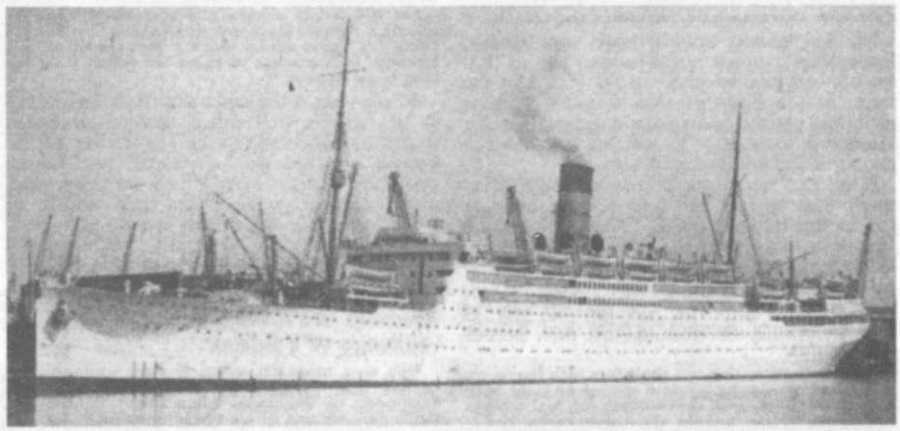
Saturday, June 8

Germans launched new attack on 60-mile front **between Aumale and Noyon.** By nightfall enemy had reached **Breteuil.**

Enemy tank column penetrated French defences and **reached Forges-les-Eaux.**

French counter-attacked south of Aisne, where Germans had established bridge-head.

R.A.F. continued day and night battering of enemy communications and objectives.



On June 8, 1940, the Admiralty announced the loss of H.M.S. "Carinthia," 20,277 tons, an armed merchant cruiser, seen above. She was commanded by Captain J. F. B. Barratt, R.N., and was sunk after a gallant fight with a U-boat. Two officers and two ratings were killed, but the rest of the ship's company of over 300 were saved. She was formerly a Cunard White Star liner.

Concealed ammunition dumps in Ardennes bombed. Further raids made into North-West Germany.

During night of June 7-8 **French naval 'planes bombed** factories near **Berlin.**

Admiralty announced that H.M.S. "Carinthia," armed merchant cruiser, had been sunk by U-boat.

Sunday, June 9

German offensive increased in extent and violence. From Forges-les-Eaux **armoured units reached outskirts of Rouen and Pont de l'Arche,** on the Seine.

Enemy launched attack in Champagne along 25-mile front between **Château Porcien** and **Le Chesne. Parachute troops** were dropped north of **Vouziers** but were immediately surrounded.

Enemy pressure diminished in Bresle region and Aumale-Noyon sector, but was resumed south of Aisne near Soissons

Heavy enemy raids round Paris, particularly in region of **Pontoise.**

Admiralty announced that contact had been made between British and German naval forces in northern waters on June 8.

Monday, June 10

Italy declared war on the Allies hostilities to begin at midnight.

Battle of France raged with growing violence. **Enemy pressure increased** between roads from Amiens to Rouen and from Amiens to Vernon, and **some elements crossed the Lower Seine.**

In **Soissons sector** enemy resumed attack southwards towards **R. Ourcq** and eastwards in direction of **Fismes.**

In **Champagne** enemy attacked with new divisions on both sides of **Rethel** and reached **R. Retourne.** Farther east in **Argonne** battle raged with intensity. Everywhere there was stubborn resistance.

French artillery opened **heavy bombardment on German positions at Swiss end** of the front.

R.A.F. dropped over **6,600 incendiary bombs** over munition dumps in **Ardennes forests.** During night of June 9-10 British bombers ranged from mouth of Somme to Flushing and Mézières and throughout industrial areas of the Ruhr.

Ministry of Information announced that **Allied troops** had been **withdrawn from Northern Norway,** to be used elsewhere.

King Haakon, Prince Olaf and members of Norwegian Government arrived in London.

Admiralty announced that following ships must be presumed lost: H.M. aircraft carrier "Glorious," destroyers "Acasta" and "Ardent," transport "Orama" and tanker "Oil Pioneer."

Tuesday, June 11

Battle of France reached greatest violence on whole of fighting front.

Under cover of smoke screens **Germans attempted to cross Seine between Rouen and Vernon.**

Farther east **French made fighting withdrawal** to positions **south of R. Marne.**

In **Champagne** enemy brought up fresh divisions south of the Aisne and attempted to cross the Retourne. In **Argonne** all attacks were repulsed. French counter-attacked south of **Attigny.**

R.A.F. bombed enemy lines of communication leading to Rouen and the Seine, and damaged railways, roads and bridges. Continuous attacks made on important crossings of the Meuse, and also on military objectives in Western Germany

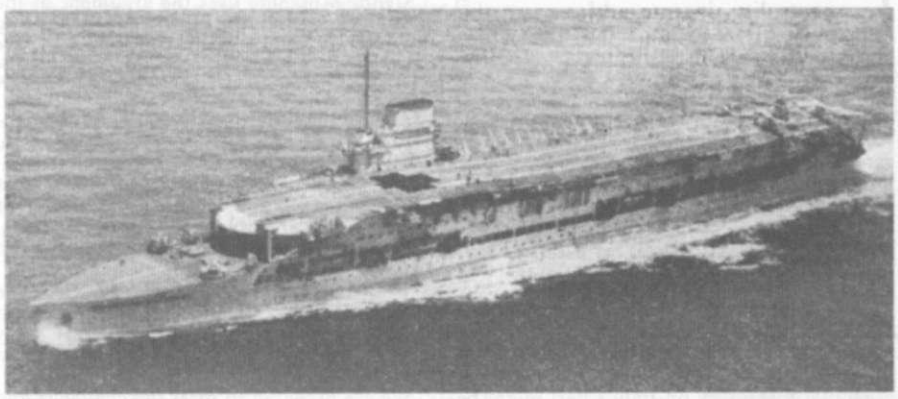
R.A.F. raided aerodromes in Libya and Italian East Africa, inflicting severe damage.

South African Air Force bombed Moyale, Italian frontier post in Abyssinia.

Unconfirmed reports of Italian attacks on British and French Somaliland.

Italian aeroplanes attacked **Malta,** killing 35 civilians and 6 soldiers.

Aircraft of Coastal Command bombed enemy warships in **Trondheim** harbour; two cruisers and transport hit.



During the last stages of the war in Norway the Royal Navy lost the aircraft carrier "Glorious" and two destroyers, "Acasta" and "Ardent." Above is H.M.S. "Glorious." A ship of 22,500 tons, she was launched in 1916 as an unarmoured cruiser, but in 1924 was converted into an aircraft carrier, as was her sister ship "Courageous," sunk on September 17, 1939.